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COMING HOME

Remains returned by North Korea, 'likely to be American,' bound for US



Remains recently handed over by North Korea are seen before a ceremony at Osan Air Base, South Korea, on Wednesday.

PHOTOS BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

BY KIM GAMEL AND MARCUS FICHTL
Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — Remains handed over by North Korea last week are likely from American war dead, an official said Wednesday ahead of a repatriation ceremony.

The comments provided the first clues about the identities of the remains inside the 55 boxes returned as part of a promise made by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during his June 12 summit with President Donald Trump.

The caskets lined up in a hangar at Osan were covered with blue United Nations flags pending final identifica-

tion, symbolic of the fact that 15 other nations fought with the United States in the 1950-53 war.

But a two-day forensic review showed that the remains appear to be human and "are likely to be American," John Byrd, an anthropologist with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, told reporters before the formal send-off.

"Our preliminary findings were that the remains are what the [North Korean] officials said they were," Byrd said, adding that it was one of the largest unilateral turnovers ever received from the North.

SEE REMAINS ON PAGE 3

Vet to EPA: Ban toxic chemical found in tap water on bases

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A delay by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in banning a cancer-causing industrial solvent has put at risk the lives of service-members, their families and others who live at or near hundreds of military bases, said a Marine veteran who claimed his daughter died as a result of exposure to toxic water at Camp Lejeune.

"What the hell are we waiting on? What is the EPA waiting for?" demanded Jerry Ensminger, who was stationed at the Marine Corps base in North Carolina.

Ensminger, flanked by other families impacted by the toxic water, made his plea Wednesday during a news conference on Capitol Hill to urge the EPA to ban high-risk uses of the carcinogenic compound known as trichloroethylene, or TCE, which is

impacting an estimated 14 million Americans, according to the advocacy and research organization Environmental Working Group, which publicized the findings after studying EPA-mandated tests.

"In 2015, the latest year for which comprehensive data is available, TCE was detected in EPA-mandated tests by 321 public water systems in 36 states," the environmental group found. "In about half of those systems, average annual levels of TCE were above what some health authorities say is safe for infants and developing fetuses."

TCE has been found at more than 400 Superfund sites, many of which are at or near military

SEE TOXIC ON PAGE 7

MILITARY

Partnership aims to counter China's influence

US, Japan and Australia announce plans for joint investments in Pacific

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

A Chinese navy ship will dock in Fiji days after the United States, Japan and Australia announced plans for joint investments seen as a counterweight to the communists' growing influence in the Pacific.

The investment plans announced Monday by the Pacific allies are seen as a counterweight to China's "Belt and Road" initiative to build roads, railways, ports, pipelines and power plants across Asia.

"This trilateral partnership is in recognition that more support is needed to enhance peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region," Australia Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said in a statement Tuesday.

The partnership will be run by the U.S.' Overseas Private Investment Corp., the Japanese Bank for International Cooperation and Australia's Department of For-

eign Affairs and Trade.

The Australian statement didn't give details about funding but said the partnership would "mobilize investment in infrastructure, such as energy, transportation, tourism, and technology."

Paul Buchanan, an American security analyst based in Auckland, New Zealand, said Australia and New Zealand have already boosted aid funding in response to Chinese efforts in the region.

"In New Zealand's case the funding is seen as belated and after the cat is out the bag," he said.

In Tonga, for example, the Chinese are building a new embassy that will serve as a signals intelligence base close to undersea data cables, Buchanan said.

In Fiji — where the People's Liberation Army Navy hospital ship Daishan Dao is due Thursday for its second visit — Beijing has given the navy a new "surveillance and hydrographic" ship.



LAURIE DEXTER/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

The Chinese navy hospital ship Daishan Dao, also known as Peace Ark, departs Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, in 2016.

Earlier reports said China had provided Fijian police with training and vehicles, and that police have asked for Chinese surveillance drones.

Brad Glosserman, a visiting professor at Tokyo's Tama University, said there's a massive

need for infrastructure spending in the Pacific regardless of what China does.

"This [trilateral partnership] is about competition for hearts and minds in the region and the world and to pretend otherwise is silly," he said.

Correction

Two ages were incorrect in an Aug. 1 article about Alejandra Juarez and her fight to avoid deportation as a combat veteran's wife. She was 18 when she came to the United States, and her daughter, Estela, is 9.

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Reward offered in death on Ga. military base

FORT STEWART, Ga. — Authorities are offering up to \$20,000 in reward money for tips that help solve the slaying of woman at a military base in Georgia.

Army investigators said Abree Boykin, 24, was found dead July 10 at her home on Fort Stewart

southwest of Savannah. She was the wife of a soldier who was deployed to Afghanistan at the time of her death.

The Army Criminal Investigation Command and the FBI announced the reward in a news release Monday.

The cash is being offered for information leading to an arrest and conviction in Boykin's death.

ing on Route 28 early Saturday morning when his SUV collided with another vehicle.

The driver of the other vehicle, Mickey Rivera, 22, of Fall River, also died, and his passenger was seriously injured.

Quinn was a Marine veteran who served two tours of duty in Afghanistan.

From The Associated Press

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PACIFIC



Far left: Members of a multinational honor guard salute an Air Force transport plane as it prepares to take off at Osan Air Base, South Korea, for its trip to Hawaii on Wednesday.

Left: The honor guard loads three caskets onto an Air Force transport plane.

Remains: Single dog tag was also returned

FROM FRONT PAGE

"There's no reason at this point to doubt that they do relate to Korean War losses," Byrd said.

Byrd said the North Koreans provided enough information about where the remains were found to place them on a battleground in 1950-51.

Byrd, director of scientific analysis for the DPAA, also confirmed a report that a single dog tag was provided with the remains and said the family of that individual has been notified.

But, he stressed, it was not known if the soldier's remains were among those being repatriated as the North Koreans had expressed concern about commingling.

He said other evidence that the boxes contained American remains included military hardware such as helmets, canteens and boots.

Byrd also said scientists were confident that there were no animal bones mixed up with the remains.

'Never Forgotten'

Gen. Vincent Brooks, who leads the U.N. Command and U.S. Forces Korea, presided over a ceremony titled "Never Forgotten," with full honors, including a wreath laying and a rifle salute.

"Our work is not complete until all are accounted for, no matter how long it takes," Brooks told the audience of hundreds of service-members and dignitaries from the other nations that contributed and often also lost troops.

The caskets were then loaded three by three to two Air Force planes that were to fly them to Hawaii.

One was grounded due to a maintenance safety concern, but the remains on board were transferred to a third aircraft that took off a few hours later, according to the UNC public affairs office.

Vice President Mike Pence, whose father fought in the Korean War, was scheduled to attend an "honorable carry ceremony" at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam to mark the arrival of the remains on U.S. soil.

The remains will undergo a



Remains recently handed over by North Korea are loaded onto an Air Force transport plane at Osan Air Base for their trip to Hawaii on Wednesday.

PHOTOS BY MARCUS FICHTL/Stars and Stripes

lengthy forensics process at the military lab, which is staffed by more than 30 anthropologists, archaeologists and forensic odontologists.

U.S. officials also are eager to resume searches in North Korea for more remains, an effort that has been stalled for more than a decade due to rising nuclear tensions.

"We do not know if the North Koreans have any additional remains, but I'll tell you this is a great first step towards bringing a bunch of fallen Americans home," Rear Adm. Jon Kreitz said during a press conference.

"We look forward to potentially pursuing operations in North Korea in the future and we're very hopeful that again this is just a great first step in building some confidence and building a relationship," he added.

The DPAA has what it calls family reference samples, including DNA, for more than 90 percent of the missing servicemembers.

More than 7,600 American servicemembers remain missing from the war, which ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

Some 5,300 of those are believed to have been lost in North Korea, which is separated from the South by one of the world's most fortified borders since the war ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

"Just over 1,000 men are unrecov'ered" from the so-called Demilitarized Zone and nearby buffer zones, according to the DPAA.

Search continues

Joint U.S.-North Korean military search teams recovered 229

sets of American remains from North Korea between 1996 and 2005.

The U.S. was allowed to conduct 33 investigative and recovery operations in the country before former President George W. Bush's administration called off the search, claiming the safety of American participants was not guaranteed.

Critics at the time also argued the U.S. was using the program to extort money from Washington, prompting the label "bones for bucks."

The last repatriation was in 2007, when then-New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson traveled to Pyongyang and returned with six sets of remains.

The State Department has said no payment was made for the current set of remains.

The Trump administration has

hailed the repatriation as a significant goodwill gesture even as efforts toward persuading the North to abandon its nuclear weapons have faltered.

Kim Jong Un committed to try to work toward the "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" during the summit in Singapore, but he agreed to no specific measures or timelines.

The North demonstrated sharp progress in its program last year when it test-fired numerous missiles and conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test.

But tensions have ebbed as diplomatic efforts advance and Kim announced his country would suspend long-range missile and nuclear tests.

Joint U.S.-North Korean military search teams recovered 229

MILITARY

Former Marine recruit files lawsuit over food illness

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A former Marine recruit discharged last year after contracting the bacteria *E. coli* during the final phases of training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego filed a lawsuit blaming the company that supplies food to the military base for his illness.

Lawyers representing Vincent Grano filed the lawsuit against Sodexo Inc. on Tuesday in the Southern District Court of California, charging their client suffered permanent brain and kidney damage after contracting *E. coli* from undercooked ground beef served at the company-run facility on the training base, according to court documents filed by the Marler Clark law firm. The suit seeks "just compensation in a fair and reasonable amount for the damages" that Grano has suffered including large hospital bills, according to court

documents.

The lawsuit does not target the Marine Corps, said Bill Marler, a managing partner for the Seattle-based law firm.

Marine Corps officials announced in the fall that they had launched an investigation after more than 300 recruits fell ill in October. Several recruits were diagnosed at that time with *E. coli* infections, though officials said they were not immediately able to identify the source of the illnesses.

Lawyers for Grano said the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention determined undercooked ground beef was likely to blame for the outbreak. The attorneys said that in the 10 days before Grano first showed signs of illness he consumed only food from Sodexo.

In a report CDC officials wrote they had confirmed 62 cases of *E. coli*, 62 probable cases and 120 more patients who they suspected contracted the bacterial infection at the recruit depot in October. They wrote

undercooked ground beef was a potential source. However, they also expressed concerns about poor hygiene among the Marine recruits.

Sodexo is a Maryland-based company that runs some 13,000 dining facility operations across North America, including dining facilities at the San Diego recruit depot.

In their lawsuit, Grano's attorneys allege Sodexo violated federal, state and local food regulations and its own corporate guidelines by serving inferior food products that were not properly prepared. They also allege the company failed to properly train and supervise its employees to prepare the food.

Sodexo officials did not immediately respond Tuesday to an email requesting comment about the lawsuit.

Grano, 19, fell ill, suffering from stomach cramps, nausea, diarrhea and vomiting, on Oct. 23, just one day before he was set to begin The Crucible, the Marines'

legendary 54-hour final training test of boot camp, according to the lawsuit. Three days after those initial symptoms, Grano was taken briefly to the emergency room after experiencing bloody diarrhea.

On Oct. 29, Grano lost consciousness and was admitted to a military hospital where he tested positive for *E. coli* and was diagnosed with hemolytic uremic syndrome, or HUS, a form of kidney failure that develops in about 5 to 7 percent of *E. coli* patients, according to the CDC. He remained in the hospital until Dec. 3, according to the lawsuit.

Grano was later diagnosed with epilepsy as a result of the HUS, the lawsuit charges. He has suffered seizures and permanent brain and kidney damage that led to his discharge from the Marine Corps, the lawsuit states.

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Training resumes at Fort Hood as wildfires on base contained

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Live-fire training has resumed at Fort Hood now that firefighters have contained the wildfires in the post's training area, according to a statement released Tuesday by Fort Hood.

The fire in the northern portion of the training area at the base is now 100 percent

contained and any hot spots are within a controlled area, according to the news release. A small remnant of a larger fire in the southern portion of the range remains within the impact area, where troops fire live rounds. Because no one is allowed access to the area, it is safe to resume training, base officials said.

At the fire's largest, it covered about 8,500 acres of the 214,000-acre post. It was

unclear how many acres were still burning.

Fort Hood leadership suspended live-fire training a week ago but cleared units to resume activities on all ranges Tuesday. During the past week, officials said there was no impact to readiness, as units adjusted their schedules to work on other skills.

Relief from the fire, which began July 17, followed a two-week streak of temperatures in Central Texas reaching more than 100

degrees.

Because conditions remain dry and primed for fire danger, officials at Fort Hood will continue preventative measures, the news release stated. Fire department and public works officials will continue to improve the boundaries of the range area and fire breaks.

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MILITARY

Germany-based airman found dead on autobahn

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — An airman assigned to Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany was found unresponsive on the A60 autobahn near the base and declared dead Tuesday afternoon, base officials said in a statement.

The cause of death is under investigation.

Officials have not released the airman's name or any further details.

Spangdahlem is located in rural southwestern Germany.

Ex-sailor sentenced for accidental shooting

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — A former Navy sailor who prosecutors say accidentally shot and killed his friend after showing off his gun has been sentenced to prison.

The Virginian-Pilot reported Alec Wagner, 24, was sentenced to six months Tuesday.

He pleaded guilty to the 2016 involuntary manslaughter of Aleigha Hawkingberry, 18, earlier this year.

Prosecutors said they believed Wagner didn't intend to harm Hawkingberry, but it was a criminal case because he had been trained to handle a firearm properly.

Wagner had told police he showed the gun to Hawkingberry, and then drove her home. She was standing outside and talking to him while he was putting it back in the glove compartment.

His hand was on the trigger and she was shot when he banged it on the steering wheel.

Anomaly ends unarmed missile test flight

VANDEBERG AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — An unarmed U.S. Air Force Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile was intentionally destroyed in flight when an anomaly occurred during a test launch from California.

An Air Force Global Strike Command statement says the flight was safely terminated over the Pacific Ocean at 4:42 a.m. Tuesday.

The Minuteman system's accuracy and reliability is routinely tested with launches from Vandenberg that send a missile's re-entry vehicle on a 4,200-mile flight to a target in the Kwajalein Atoll of the Marshall Islands.

The Air Force says an anomaly is any unexpected event during a test and could arise from different factors.

A launch analysis group is being formed from various Air Force organizations.

From staff and wire reports

Construction underway on San Antonio-class McCool

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

Fabrication began on the Navy's newest amphibious transport dock ship Monday in Pascagoula, Miss.

The first 100 tons of steel has been cut for the future USS Richard M. McCool Jr., which is expected to carry about 720 troops and take on MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft, amphibious assault vehicles and "virtually every size of Marine Corps helicopter," a Navy statement said.

The San Antonio-class McCool will be the last of the Navy's LPD-17 Flight I class ships that are expected to "support amphibious assault, special operations and expeditionary warfare missions through the first half of the 21st century," the statement said.

"We continue to benefit from the maturity of this program and look forward to achieving future production milestones as we work to deliver this ver-

'We continue to benefit from the maturity of this program and look forward to achieving future production milestones.'

CAPT. BRIAN METCALF
LPD 17 class program manager

the future USS Richard M. McCool and his heroic actions will continue to inspire Sailors and Marines for decades to come."

The McCool is being built by Huntington Ingalls Industries, which is also working to repair the guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald after damage suffered in a collision that killed seven sailors last year off Japan.

It's unclear when construction on the McCool will be completed.

In June, the company delivered the nuclear-powered fast-attack submarine USS Indiana to the Navy after working on its construction since 2012, a Huntington Ingalls statement said.

The submarine will enter service in late September, according to the Indiana's commissioning committee.

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WAR/MILITARY

ISIS fighters flee Taliban, surrender to Afghans

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The allied coalition's battle against Islamic State in Afghanistan received a boost from another enemy Wednesday, when Taliban guerrillas drove ISIS fighters out of northern Jawzjan province.

More than 150 ISIS fighters surrendered to Afghan government forces after the Taliban launched an offensive against them, officials said. U.S. forces have also been conducting airstrikes against ISIS in the area for months.

"These people were surrounded by the Taliban for several days, but last night they managed to break free and surrender to government forces," Faqir Mohammad Jawzjani, Jawzjan's police chief, told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday.

The surrender is a major setback for ISIS in Afghanistan, known as ISIS-Khorasan Province. The group emerged in the country's east about four years ago and recently appeared to be growing stronger in the north.

Officials say it is difficult to know exactly how many ISIS fighters are operating in the country, but some put the figure as high as

2,000.

"This was Daesh's last center in the north of Afghanistan," Jawzjani said, using an Arabic acronym for ISIS. "Now we can say that Daesh is cleared from the north."

The Taliban, who differ ideologically and culturally from ISIS, said more than 150 ISIS fighters were killed during their offensive and that the weapons of the dead were seized. Government officials were not immediately able to confirm the Taliban's claimed death toll.

"The root of Daesh has been taken out of Jawzjan," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement.

In 2017, U.S. military officials in Afghanistan said one of their top goals was to eliminate ISIS in the country by the end of the year. The group has proved resilient in eastern Nangarhar province and continues to carry out indiscriminate attacks in Kabul.

Gen. John Nicholson, the U.S. top commander in Afghanistan, told reporters last week that U.S. forces were "very concerned about ISIS" and "going fully at ISIS."

"We also note that the Taliban is fighting ISIS, and we encourage that because ISIS needs to be destroyed," Nicholson said.

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AP

A foreign Islamic State fighter, second right, speaks to a journalist after he surrendered to government security forces in the Darzab district of Jawzjan province, north of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Wednesday.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ASHLEY MALDONADO/Courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

Airmen are now authorized to purchase and wear a long- or short-sleeved breastfeeding T-shirt with their utility uniform.

USAF follows Army in approving T-shirts for breastfeeding

BY SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

Air Force mothers now may wear T-shirts in uniform that let them more easily breastfeed their babies.

The Air Force changed its dress code in July to allow mothers to wear short- or long-sleeved breastfeeding T-shirts with utility uniforms.

The change, which takes effect Oct. 1, comes with a few rules. The T-shirt must be sand-colored when worn with the airman battle uniform and tan when worn with a camouflage uniform. Also, mothers cannot remove their uniform blouses while nursing or pumping unless they are in a designated lactation room.

Standard T-shirts expose the

torso of women who are nursing infants.

Tech. Sgt. Natalia Wood, a mother of three who's pregnant with a fourth child, lobbied for the dress code revision so breastfeeding could be more comfortable and less revealing.

"I'm trying to normalize breastfeeding, not for me, but for all future generations," Wood said in a statement. "I was thinking more about everyone behind me. I just feel like we are the leader in securing our skies, but when it comes to this, we're lagging behind."

The Army changed its dress code in April to allow the T-shirts, while the Navy and Marines still don't authorize them.

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NATO to expand training program to aid the US-led coalition in Iraq

BY SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — NATO will provide 200 personnel to train Iraq's security forces to prevent Islamic State from regaining a foothold in the region, a top U.S. commander said.

Joint Force Command Naples will lead the training mission, approved at NATO's July summit, and will deploy sometime after this summer to set up the expanded training program, JFC officials said.

"We have people who understand how to maintain the infantry branch, maintain the armor corps, how to teach strategy and tactics, how to disarm bombs," Adm. James Foggo, head of JFC Naples, said Tuesday in a Defense Department news report. "We're going to find things where there may be gaps or seams where the Iraqi armed forces might need help with."

The coalition's four-year campaign, pounding ISIS from the ground and air, has driven militants from their strongholds and left them scattered in two areas

in Syria next to the Iraqi border.

But a surprise ISIS attack last week on the government-held town of Sweida in southwestern Syria, which killed more than 200 people, has sparked fears that the terrorist group could stage a resurgence.

Having more trainers in country to bolster security forces' combat skills will help avoid a repeat of 2014, when ISIS fighters quickly overran large swaths of Iraq and Syria, NATO officials have said.

"ISIS has a shrewd and relentless ability to reincarnate itself," said Hayat Alvi, associate professor of national security affairs at the Naval War College. "The anti-ISIS military campaigns have pulled the rug from underneath Iraq in Syria and Iraq ... but ISIS is far from eliminated."

Under concerted campaigns by the U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi and Syrian government forces, ISIS has lost almost all of the territory it once held.

Many of the group's leaders have either been killed or forced underground, but some key figures remain, Alvi said.

NATO ran a 130-strong training mission in Iraq from 2004 until 2011, but withdrew its forces because of a disagreement with Baghdad over the legal status of foreign troops in the country. NATO now keeps a seven-person core team in Iraq to help coordinate sending in temporary trainers, medical staff and mechanics, Foggo said. Those groups have taught Iraqi soldiers everything from triage to fixing old Russian equipment to neutralizing explosive devices, he said.

A Canadian major general will oversee the bigger training mission, which will work to meet Iraqis' requests for technical training and advanced training in such tasks as explosive ordnance disposal.

Foggo praised the Iraqi soldiers who have fought against ISIS.

"I see them as being brave, very professional and very focused on the task that they have to rebuild their country now that they have succeeded in taking it back," he said.

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US military leader, Turkish officials talk Syria

Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — The U.S. military's European commander and NATO's top military officer has met with Turkey's chief military and defense officials to discuss Syria and other regional issues.

Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti's talks Wednesday come as tensions be-

tween NATO allies Turkey and the United States are running high over several issues, including the arrest of an American pastor in Turkey accused of terrorism-related charges and espionage. Washington has threatened Turkey with sanctions if the pastor is not freed.

Turkey's military said Scapar-

rotti exchanged views on Syria, Iraq and NATO with Turkish Chief of Staff Gen. Yasar Guler. It did not elaborate on the talks.

Turkey and the U.S. have agreed on a "road map" for the strategic Syrian town of Manbij, which includes the withdrawal of Syrian Kurdish terrorists. Turkey considers them to be terrorists.

MILITARY

Memo: Conditions at VA hospital 'deteriorating'

By Nikki Wentling
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — After being deemed high-risk in January, the flagship Department of Veterans Affairs hospital in Washington has continued to deteriorate in quality during the first six months of 2018. The hospital was designated "critical" and its performance is under administrative review, including possible changes of leadership, according to a memorandum sent to the D.C. hospital July 17 from Carolyn Clancy, then executive in charge of the Veterans Health Administration. The memo was obtained Wednesday by Stars and Stripes.

"Unfortunately, we have not seen the amount of improvement desired over the past two quarters and now see benefit in utilizing additional measures to support the facility in stabilizing the hospital's quality to the extent that it can be sustained," Clancy wrote.

According to the memo, the hospital isn't getting better, despite public assertions from VA officials over the past several months that problems there were being fixed.

In March, the VA Office of Inspector General released a scathing report detailing a culture of complacency at the hospital that allowed widespread failures to persist for years, putting veterans at risk and weakening core functions of the hospital.

Since then, inspection reports from the Food and Drug Administration and the VA's National Program Office for Sterile Process have revealed ongoing problems. The reports, seen by Stars and Stripes, also point to specific instances of dirty syringe bottles, unsanitary conditions, rooms in disarray and staff and supply shortages that led to canceled procedures.

The Washington facility is one of 15 VA hospitals that have a one-star rating — the lowest possible out of five — based on quality comparisons among 170 VA hospitals nationwide. The VA announced in Febru-

ary it would take a "new aggressive approach" to improve its low-performing hospitals, including quarterly reviews.

Clancy's "critical" rating is based on the latest performance report from the second quarter of 2018.

The areas of greatest concern at the Washington hospital, Clancy wrote, are access, medical health, employee satisfaction and "avoidable adverse events." Additionally, VA officials are concerned about the "large deterioration" in the past year in preventable hospitalizations and adjusting patient length of stay.

An administrative review by VA headquarters will be held in the "very near future," Clancy wrote last month. Leaders of the Washington hospital would be required to attend and show quantifiable evidence of improvement.

"A discussion of changes in leadership needed for achieving the medical center's quality objectives and sustaining them will be included in the review," she warned.

Senior leaders now require monthly briefings on the hospital and will reassess the facility every one to three months, she said.

The VA said Wednesday that the Washington hospital had "demonstrated large improvements" in the past year on nurse turnover and specialty care.

"Despite this progress, VA notified facility leaders July 17 it has not seen the amount of improvement desired over the past two quarters and is taking additional steps to support the facility," the VA wrote in a statement. Officials declined to answer any questions.

Since the memo was written, Clancy has taken a new position at the VA as an under-secretary for discovery and advancement. Richard Stone took over Clancy's position as executive in charge of the VA health care system.

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Toxic: Ban on TCE urged

FROM FRONT PAGE

bases such as Camp Lejeune, according to the environmental group. Some veterans and their families who served or lived there later developed various kinds of cancer and neurological ailments, such as Parkinson's disease, from drinking water contaminated with TCE or other toxic chemicals, according to the group.

On Wednesday, Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., joined Ensminger and residents from five states who denounced delays to enforce the TCE ban at the Superfund sites, which are lands contaminated by hazardous waste. The impacted residents from New York, North Carolina, Indiana, Arizona and California said TCE exposure has led to illnesses in their families.

"People should be able to trust their government to be doing everything they can," Udall said. "These heroic citizens are making a simple request, protect the people, ban TCE."

Ensminger lost his daughter, Janey, in 1985 to leukemia. Ensminger, who retired in 1984, said Janey, who died at the age of 6, was his only child exposed to the chemicals, and he's deeply troubled by the inaction on TCE.

"Is it the EPA or should we call it the EDA, the environmental destruction agency? That's what it has turned into under this administration. It's a joke," Ensminger said.

The concerns come after an Environmental Working Group report last month found widespread TCE water contamination

and during a tumultuous time for the EPA, which saw its controversial chief, Scott Pruitt, resign last month. His potential replacement, acting EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler, testified before a Senate hearing Wednesday.

"You are staffing [the EPA] with people from chemical industries," Ensminger railed. "The administrator is a former coal lobbyist and the one before him an attorney general known for giveaways to polluters. Really? I'm at a loss. This is crazy."

Exposure to TCE has been linked to birth defects, liver, kidney and neurological damage, as well as leukemia and other cancers, the Environmental Working Group said.

In December 2016, the EPA proposed banning uses of TCE as an aerosol degreaser and spot cleaner in dry-cleaning facilities, the first proposed ban in more than 25 years under the Toxic Substances Control Act. The EPA later proposed a ban of TCE in vapor degreasers.

Under President Donald Trump's administration, the EPA has retreated from its proposed bans, the environmental group and others claim.

"We are here two years later and the EPA still hasn't finalized its ban," Udall said. "Unfortunately, it looks like the Trump EPA has never met a chemical it doesn't like."

An EPA spokeswoman did not respond to a request for comment.

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NATION

Prosecutors: Manafort had 'secret income'

BY CHAD DAY
AND ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Paul Manafort orchestrated a multimillion-dollar conspiracy to evade U.S. tax and banking laws, leaving behind a trail of lies as he lived a lavish lifestyle, prosecutors said as they laid out their case against the former Trump campaign chairman.

Prosecutor Uzo Asonye told the jury during his opening statement Tuesday that Manafort considered himself above the law as he funneled tens of millions of dollars through offshore accounts. That "secret income" was used to pay for personal expenses such as a \$21,000 watch, a \$15,000 jacket made of ostrich and more than \$6 million worth of real estate paid for in cash, Asonye said.

"A man in this courtroom believed the law did not apply to him — not tax law, not banking law," Asonye said as he sketched out the evidence gathered by special counsel Robert Mueller's team in Manafort's bank fraud and tax evasion trial.

Manafort's trial is the first arising from Mueller's investigation into potential ties between Donald Trump's presidential campaign and Russia. It opened with extraordinary anticipation amid unresolved questions about whether Trump associates coordinated with the Kremlin to tip the election in the president's favor.

But it was clear from the outset that the case would not address that question. Prosecutors did not once reference Manafort's



MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP

Kevin Downing, an attorney for Paul Manafort, leaves the Alexandria Federal Courthouse in Alexandria, Va., on Tuesday at the conclusion of the first day of Manafort's tax evasion and bank fraud trial.

work for the Trump campaign nor mention Mueller's broader and ongoing investigation into Russian election interference. Mueller was not present in the courtroom.

Manafort, the lone American charged by Mueller who has opted to stand trial instead of cooperate with prosecutors, was described by his defense lawyer as a hugely successful international political consultant who left the details of his finances to others.

He relied on a team of financial experts to keep track of the millions of dollars he earned from his Ukrainian political work and to ensure that that money was

being properly reported, said attorney Thomas Zehnle. He especially trusted business associate Rick Gates, who pleaded guilty in Mueller's investigation and is now the government's star witness. But that trust was misplaced, Zehnle said in an opening statement that made clear that undermining the credibility of Gates — a former Trump campaign aide who spent years working for Manafort in Ukraine — is central to the defense strategy.

The trial, decided by a jury of six men and six women who were seated after a brief selection process Tuesday, is expected to last several weeks.

Mueller referred part of probe to NY prosecutors

BY DEVIN BARRETT
AND MATT ZAPOTOSKY
The Washington Post

Special counsel Robert Mueller has referred another piece of his investigation to federal prosecutors in New York, asking them to take over an inquiry into whether American lobbyists violated any laws by not registering their work for the Ukraine government, according to people familiar with the matter.

Mueller's referral — essentially handing over an ongoing case to another prosecutor to determine whether charges should be brought — came months ago, these people said. One said there has not been significant activity in the matter since.

The referral was first reported by CNN on Tuesday. The Washington Post previously reported that Mueller has been winding down some of the investigations he is overseeing, in part by farming out cases to other federal prosecutors. He had referred part of his investigation of President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, to

that same office. That inquiry is ongoing.

Spokesmen for the special counsel's office and the U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan declined to comment.

The referral to prosecutors in New York centers on lobbying work done years ago to try to improve the image of the Ukraine government.

Federal law requires that Americans who seek to influence the U.S. government on another country's behalf file paperwork registering themselves as agents of a foreign government.

Mueller's investigation of those issues led to an indictment against former Trump campaign Chairman Paul Manafort.

Other Americans, including lobbyists Tony Podesta and Vin Weber, and lawyers at the law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, have fallen under scrutiny because they worked with Manafort on his pro-Ukraine efforts. It is that part of the investigation that has been referred to New York prosecutors, said people familiar with the matter.

Trump ties groceries to voter ID debate

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — President Donald Trump wrongly claimed that shoppers need to show photo identification to buy groceries and accused Democrats of obstructing his agenda and his Supreme Court nominee during a raucous rally aimed at bolstering two Florida Republicans ahead of the state's primary.

Trump, addressing thousands of supporters Tuesday night in one of the nation's top electoral battlegrounds, also mounted a vigorous defense of his trade agenda, accusing China and others of having "targeted our farmers."

"Not good, not nice," he told the crowd as tensions with China continue to escalate, adding: "You know what our farmers are saying? It's OK, we can take it."

The Trump administration last week announced plans for \$12 billion in temporary aid to help farmers deal with retaliatory tariffs from U.S. trading partners in response to Trump's policies.

The freewheeling rally lasted more than an hour and included numerous attacks on the media, as well as one glaring false claim. Trump was railing against the idea of noncitizens voting and advocating stricter voting laws when he claimed that IDs are

Trump labels Manafort case 'a hoax,' again urges AG to end Mueller probe

BY JOHN WAGNER
AND DEVILIN BARRETT
The Washington Post

President Donald Trump on Wednesday called the prosecution of his former campaign chairman Paul Manafort "a hoax" and urged Attorney General Jeff Sessions to terminate the investigation into Russian election interference.

In several tweets, Trump escalated his attacks on the investigation, led by special counsel Robert Mueller, that includes examining whether Trump's campaign coordinated with Russia and whether Trump has obstructed the probe.

His tweets come at a particularly sensitive time in the investigation, as a federal jury in Virginia is hearing evidence in Manafort's trial on tax evasion.

Trump called Mueller's probe "a terrible situation" that should be stopped "before it continues to stain our country any further."

U.S. attorneys are prosecuting Manafort for allegedly failing to pay taxes on millions he

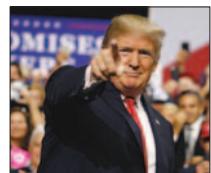
made from his work for a Russia-friendly Ukrainian political party and then lying to get loans when the cash stopped coming in. The Mueller investigation turned up evidence being used in the trial, but the charges are not related to Russian interference in the 2016 election.

Writing on Twitter, Trump dismissed the charges against Manafort as "old charges (that) have nothing to do with Collusion" and questioned why the government didn't tell him Manafort was under investigation before he hired him to be part of his 2016 campaign.

Mueller was appointed special counsel by Attorney General Rod Rosenstein after Sessions recused himself from the probe, citing his work on Trump's 2016 campaign.

Trump has privately pressed Sessions to end his recusal and take control of the Mueller probe, but those efforts have not been successful.

In June, Trump's 2020 campaign manager, Brad Parscale, called for Sessions to be fired and "end the Mueller investigation."



EVAN VUCCI/AP

President Donald Trump arrives for a rally Tuesday in Tampa, Fla.

Trump has publicly threatened to shut down the federal government over his push to overhaul the nation's immigration system and fund his signature border wall, though officials say he has privately assured staff he wouldn't provoke a fiscal crisis before midterms. The president avoided making an outright reference to a government shutdown during the rally.

Instead, he spent much of the rally highlighting strong economic numbers and praising DeSantis as a "tough, brilliant cookie." He predicted DeSantis will win against Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam in the state's Aug. 28 Republican primary.

NATION



SUSAN WALSH/AP

Vice President Mike Pence speaks at the Department of Homeland Security National Cybersecurity Summit in New York on Tuesday.

Pence condemns Russian election meddling in 2016

By ELLEN NAKASHIMA
The Washington Post

NEW YORK — Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday affirmed the U.S. intelligence community's assessment that Russia sought to influence the 2016 election, stating firmly what President Donald Trump has been reluctant to say.

"While other nations certainly possessed the capability, the fact is Russia meddled in our 2016 election," Pence said, speaking at a government cybersecurity conference here hosted by the Department of Homeland Security.

"That is the unambiguous judgment of our intelligence community, and as the President said, we 'accept the intelligence community's conclusion,'" Pence said.

With those remarks, included in what was his first speech on cybersecurity, Pence sought to tamp down the controversy fueled by Trump's reluctance to unambiguously condemn Russia for its interference in American politics.

"Russia's goal was to sow discord and division and weaken the American people's faith in our democracy," Pence said. "And while no actual votes were changed, any attempt to interfere in our elections is an affront to our democracy, and it will not be allowed. The United States of America will not tolerate any foreign interference in our elections from any nation state — not from Russia, China, Iran, North Korea or anyone else. As President Trump said, 'we're not going to have it.'"

Trump has been criticized for appearing to be soft on Moscow — most recently at a Helsinki summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin — and insufficiently engaged in countering potential Russian interference in U.S. democracy.

Earlier in the day, Homeland Security Secretary Kirsten Nielsen also called out the Russian government for its effort to undermine faith in U.S. democracy and for what she called a "brazen, multifaceted" campaign to influence the 2016 election.

"Let me be clear," she said.

"Our intelligence community had it right. It was the Russians. They know that. We know that. And we cannot let it happen again."

She issued a warning to "any foreign adversary" considering such an attack: "The United States will no longer tolerate or accept your interference. You will be exposed, and you will pay a high price."

Pence said that over the past year, the president has directed the administration to create a "whole-of-government" approach to strengthen election security. On Friday, Trump convened the National Security Council, including the heads of the FBI, CIA, National Security Agency, DHS and the Director of National Intelligence, to hear up-to-date progress. The meeting, which lasted less than an hour, was not deeply detailed, and Trump issued no new directives as a result, according to administration officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to be candid.

Federal agencies are focused on detecting and countering Russian and other foreign attempts to interfere in U.S. democracy and to disrupt election systems and other critical infrastructure.

Pence noted that the FBI has formed a Foreign Influence Task Force to identify secret foreign attempts to infiltrate the United States and undermine democracy. DHS has launched the Election Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center, which all 50 states have joined in, an effort to prevent intrusions and attacks.

Trump criticized for no clear plan to secure the elections

By DEB RIECHMANN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As alarms about Russian interference in U.S. elections, the Trump administration is facing criticism that it has no clear national strategy to protect the country during the upcoming midterms and beyond.

Both Republicans and Democrats have criticized the administration's response as fragmented, without enough coordination across federal agencies. And with the midterms just three months away, critics are calling on President Donald Trump to take a stronger stand on an issue critical to American democracy.

"There's clearly not enough leadership from the top. This is a moment to move," said Maryland Sen. Chris Van Hollen, head of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. "I don't think they are doing nearly enough."

Various government agencies have been at work to ensure safe voting. The FBI has set up a Foreign Influence Task Force, and intelligence agencies are collecting information on Russian aggression.

But Trump rarely talks about the issue. And in the nearly two years since Russians were found to have hacked into U.S. election systems and manipulated social media to influence public opinion, the White House has held two meetings on election security.

The meeting resulted in no new presidential directive to coordinate the federal effort to secure the election, said Suzanne Spaulding, former undersecretary of homeland security who was responsible for cybersecurity and protecting critical infrastructure.

"Trump's failure to take a leadership role on this, up until this (National Security Council) meeting, misses an opportunity to send a clear message to states that this is a very serious threat," Spaulding said. "We did not get out of this NSC meeting a comprehensive, interagency strategy. It was each department and agency working in their silos."

The Republican-controlled Senate on Wednesday defeated a push by Democrats to set aside an additional \$250 million in grants for states to upgrade their voting systems to protect against hacking and other cyberattacks.

An amendment offered by Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy received 50 yes votes, 10 short of the 60 needed for approval.

Leahy said securing U.S. elections and "safeguarding our democracy" was not a partisan issue, adding that the Senate "must send a clear message to Russia and other foreign adversaries" that tampering in U.S. elections won't be tolerated.

"The president will not act. This duty has fallen to us, and we must

not later be found to have been asleep at the switch with so much at stake," Leahy said.

A similar effort was also rejected in the House. Republicans said new money was not needed so soon after Congress approved \$380 million in March for the grant program. Money from the current program is still available to states if needed.

Garrett Marquis, a spokesman for the NSC, said the government response is robust. He said NSC staff "leads the regular and continuous coordination of the whole-of-government approach to addressing foreign malign influence and ensuring election security."

The debate over safeguarding U.S. elections comes as evidence of cyber threats piles up. Facebook announced Tuesday that it had uncovered "sophisticated" efforts, possibly linked to Russia, to influence U.S. politics on its platforms.

The company said it removed 32 accounts from Facebook and Instagram because they were involved in "coordinated" political behavior and appeared to be fake.

Under the current structure, the point man for election security is Rear Adm. Douglas Fears. Trump tapped Fears in early June as his deputy assistant to the president and homeland security and counterterrorism adviser.

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NATION

Administration links gas mileage to risk for drivers

BY TOM KRISHER
AND ELLEN KNICKMEYER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration says people would drive more and be exposed to increased risk if their cars get better gas mileage, an argument intended to justify freezing Obama-era toughening of fuel standards.

Transportation experts dispute the arguments, contained in a draft of the administration's proposals prepared this summer, excerpts of which were obtained by The Associated Press.

The excerpts also show the administration plans to challenge California's long-standing authority to enact its own, tougher pollution and fuel standards.

Revisions to the mileage requirements for 2021 through 2026 are still being worked on, the administration says, and changes could be made before the proposal is released as soon as this week.

The Trump administration gave notice earlier this year that it would roll back tough new fuel standards put into place in the waning days of the Obama administration. Anticipating the new regulation, California and 16 other states sued the Trump administration in May.

Overall, "improvements over time have better longer-term effects simply by not alienating consumers, as compared to great leaps forward" in fuel efficiency and other technology, the administration argues. It contends that freezing the mileage requirements at 2020 levels would save

up to 1,000 lives per year.

New vehicles would be cheaper — and heavier — if they don't have to meet more stringent fuel requirements and more people would buy them, the draft says, and that would put more drivers in safer, newer vehicles that pollute less.

At the same time, the draft says that people will drive less if their vehicles get fewer miles per gallon, lowering the risk of crashes.

David Zubay, chief research officer at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, said he's doubtful about the administration's estimate of lives saved because other factors could affect traffic deaths, such as automakers agreeing to make automatic emergency braking standard on all models before 2022. "They're making assumptions about stuff that may or may not be the same," he said.

Experts say the logic that heavier vehicles are safer doesn't hold up because lighter, newer vehicles perform as well or better than older, heavier versions in crash tests, and because the weight difference between the Obama and Trump administration requirements would be minimal.

"Allow me to be skeptical," said Giorgio Rizzoni, an engineering professor and director of the Center for Automotive Research at Ohio State University. "To say that safety is a direct result of somehow freezing the fuel economy mandate for a few years, I think that's a stretch."

Experts say that a heavier, bigger vehicle would incur less damage in a crash with a smaller, lighter one and that fatality rates



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

Cars pass the Queensboro Bridge in New York City in January. A draft of a federal regulation prepared this summer would freeze an Obama-era program to improve fuel efficiency and cut pollution.

also are higher for smaller vehicles. But they also say that lighter vehicles with metals such as aluminum, magnesium, titanium and lighter, high-strength steel alloys perform as well or better than their predecessors in crash tests.

Alan Taub, professor of materials science and engineering at the University of Michigan, said he would choose a 2017 Malibu over a heavier one from 20 years earlier. It's engineered better, has more features to avoid crashes and additional air bags, among other things. "You want to be in the newer vehicle," he said.

As April draft from the Trump administration said freezing the requirements at 2020 levels would save people \$1,900 per new vehicle. But the later draft raises that to \$2,100 and even as high as \$2,700 by 2025.

Environmental groups question the justification for freezing the standards. Luke Tonachel, director of the clean-vehicle pro-

gram at the Natural Resources Defense Council, said the risk from people driving more due to higher mileage is "tiny and maybe even negligible."

Under the Trump administration proposal, the fleet of new vehicles would have to average roughly 30 mpg in real-world driving, and that wouldn't change through 2026.

California has had the authority under the half-century-old Clean Air Act to set its own mileage under a special rule allowing the state to curb its chronic smog problem. More than a dozen states follow California's standards, amounting to about 40 percent of the country's new-vehicle market.

Asked if he thinks a freeze in U.S. mileage standards is warranted, EPA acting administrator Andrew Wheeler told a small group of reporters at EPA headquarters last week, "I think we need to go where the technology takes us" on fuel standards.

Wheeler did not elaborate. Agency spokespeople did not respond when asked specifically if the EPA acting chief was making the case that modern cars could be both fuel-efficient and safe.

Wheeler also spoke out for what he called "a 50-state solution" that would keep the U.S. car and truck market from splitting between two different mileage standards.

The Department of Transportation said in a statement that the final fuel economy standards would be based on sound science. The department cautioned that a draft doesn't capture the whole picture of the proposed regulation.

The draft said a 2012 analysis of fuel economy standards under the Obama administration deliberately limited the amount of mass reduction necessary under the standards. This was done "in order to avoid the appearance of adverse safety effects," the draft stated.

Uber shutting down its self-driving truck program

BY PETER HOLLEY
The Washington Post

The race to create self-driving trucks just got a little less crowded.

That's because Uber announced Monday that the ride-hailing giant is shuttering its self-driving truck program, a division that made history in 2016 by completing the world's first autonomous truck delivery — \$50,000 cans of Budweiser.

That division — a part of Uber's Advance Technology Group — had other successes as well, including delivering freight on highways in Arizona using automated Volvo big rigs.

The robot-driven Volvo trucks were rolled out in November and included a human backup driver, the company said. The company

The company believes it does not need to immediately develop self-driving trucks to remain a competitive force in the world of freight logistics.

did not have a formal partnership with Volvo but, instead, retrofitted Volvo trucks with its technology.

Uber said ending its self-driving truck program will allow the company to focus energy on its self-driving car program, which the company is moving to re-launch on public roads. Uber's self-driving car program was suspended in March after a pe-

destrian in Tempe, Ariz., was struck and killed by one of its driverless vehicles, leading to a National Transportation Safety Board investigation.

"We recently took the important step of returning to public roads in Pittsburgh, and as we look to continue that momentum, we believe having our entire team's energy and expertise focused on this effort is the best path forward," Eric Meyhofer, head of Uber Advanced Technologies Group, said in a statement.

Uber Freight — a smartphone app that links truck drivers to freight — will continue, the company said, noting that it remains one of Uber's most promising businesses, one that has tripled in size in little more than a year. The company believes it does not need

to immediately develop self-driving trucks to remain a competitive force in the world of freight logistics.

The company plans to shift employees currently focused on self-driving trucks to other parts of their self-driving technology programs.

Uber's self-driving truck program faced competition from a number of companies, including Tesla and Waymo — formerly known as Google's self-driving car project — which began hauling cargo in Atlanta in March. Waymo said its technology would power Peterbilt Class 8 trucks to carry cargo bound for Google's data centers.

The company's engineers have been testing self-driving trucks in California and Arizona, the same state where a fleet of 600 autono-

mos Waymo taxis has been on the roads without a human driver since November, the company said in a blog post.

"Our software is learning to drive big rigs in much the same way a human driver would after years of driving passenger cars," Waymo said in the post. "The principles are the same, but things like braking, turning, and blind spots are different with a fully-loaded truck and trailer."

A Florida start-up called Starry Robotics intends to make driverless deliveries in the company's trucks by the end of 2018, according to Wired.

Another start-up called Embark drove an automated truck across the country without a driver, completing a 2,400-mile journey from California to Florida.

NATION

Official: Warning issued on family separations

BY ALAN FRAM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Department of Health and Human Services official told senators Tuesday that his agency had warned the Trump administration that separating families would be dangerous for children. But some of the government's top immigration officials used a Senate hearing to largely defend how the policy has been implemented, with one comparing family detention centers to "a summer camp."

One official told the Senate Judiciary Committee that while the Trump administration was developing its immigration policies, Health and Human Services officials said they were worried "about any policy which would result in family separation due to concerns we had about the best interests of the child." Commander Jonathan White, of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, a branch of HHS, said they were also uncertain



Cmdr. Jonathan White, federal health coordinating official for the 2018 UAC Reunification Effort, testifies in Washington on Tuesday.

J. SCOTT APPLWHITE/AP

their department had enough resources to handle large numbers of detained immigrants.

"There's no question that separation of children from parents entails significant potential for traumatic psychological injury to the child," White said.

Asked by Sen. Richard Blu-

menthal, D-Conn., what response HHS officials go from administration policymakers, White said. "The answer was there was no policy which would result in separation of children from family units." White is a career official at HHS who has served in three administrations.

White's remarks came as the Judiciary committee questioned officials about what has become an election-year liability for the Republicans and the White House — President Donald Trump's separation of migrant children from detained families. Trump dropped the policy more than a month ago under fire from Democrats and Republicans alike. But of more than 2,500 children who were initially separated from parents and guardians, hundreds remain in federal custody including more than 400 whose parents left the U.S. without them.

Lawmakers and journalists who have visited some detention facilities around the country and migrants themselves have reported poor conditions. The top members of the Judiciary committee —

Chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, and Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif. — have asked inspectors general of two federal agencies to investigate reports by news organizations that immigrants at some centers have suffered

alleged sexual abuse and other forms of abuse.

Matthew Albence, an executive associate director at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, told the lawmakers that "the best way to describe" conditions at family detention centers was "like a summer camp." He said the facilities undergo rigorous inspections and offer basketball and other forms of recreation, food and water around the clock and medical and dental care.

"We do not leave our humanity behind when we report for duty,"

Carla L. Provost, acting chief of the U.S. Border Patrol, told members of the committee.

At one point, Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii, asked witnesses whether they would want their children to stay in one of the government's family detention centers.

"I think we're missing the point," answered Albence. "These individuals are there because they have broken a law."

3 people captured after horn shark taken from aquarium

BY ALLYSON CHIU
The Washington Post

For Miss Helen, Saturday began like any other day. The young 16-inch-long female horn shark, just one of the animals in the San Antonio Aquarium's interactive shark touch pool, spent the morning swimming around the exhibit receiving food and petting from curious visitors.

But three people went to the aquarium to do more than just touch and feed the relatively harmless Miss Helen, police say. They allegedly planned to steal her.

By Monday night, two people had confessed to taking the shark from the aquarium, Leon Valley Police Chief Joseph Salvaggio told reporters. Miss Helen was found alive in the garage of a San Antonio home that looked like a "mock-up" of the aquarium, Salvaggio said. A 38-year-old man has been charged with theft. Charges against the other two suspects are pending, Salvaggio said.

"Luckily the thief was somebody who knew what he was doing," he said. "Luckily for the shark and for the aquarium, we were able to get that animal back in one piece."

Salvaggio added that local law enforcement is working with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to see if the theft involves federal charges.

It all began Saturday afternoon when two men and a woman with a baby snuck into the aquarium through its back entrance, the aquarium's owner, Ammon Co-vino, told The Washington Post.

After milling around the aquarium, the trio made their way to the exhibit where visitors are allowed to feed and touch various types of marine animals, Covino said.

There they allegedly waited for

the perfect moment to strike.

"They staked out that exhibit, waiting for the employee to leave," Covino said. "The minute she walked out the door, they grabbed that shark."

The tools needed to pull off the heist? A net, a bucket, a blanket and a baby stroller.

Surveillance video taken at about 2 p.m. captures a man leaning over into the exhibit and emerging with the shark in a net. Cradling the shark in his hands, he walks past visitors looking at other displays and out of the camera's sight, leaving a trail of water on the aquarium's floor. Another man is also seen following closely behind.

According to a statement posted to Facebook, the aquarium said the suspects took the shark into one of their filter rooms. Once inside, they placed other animals in danger when they dumped a bucket full of bleach solution used to clean equipment into a display's filtration system. The "sanitation bucket" was used to transport the shark, the statement said.

When the men reappear on video, one of them is holding a bulky cloth-wrapped bundle under one arm, which he loads into a baby stroller. The woman stands nearby holding the baby.

As this is happening, an aquarium employee can be seen walking by, stopping at least twice to stare at the group. Covino said the employee immediately reported the suspicious behavior to the aquarium's general manager, Jenny Stellman.

Stellman told The Washington Post she found the man in the parking lot about to get into a truck. She said she told him she had seen water leaking from the baby stroller.

"He said the water was dripping because they had spilled a Yeti cup onto the stroller and they were leaving in such a hurry because their baby that was with them needed medication."

But when asked if the vehicle could be searched, the man refused, "jumped in his truck and drove off," Stellman said.

The thief was the first of its kind ever to be attempted at the aquarium, Covino said.

Even police had a hard time believing the crime was real, Salvaggio told KSAT.

"When we first got the call, we thought it was kind of a hoax being that it was Shark week last week," Salvaggio said, referencing the Discovery Channel's

weeklong TV programming dedicated to sharks. "But it turns out someone actually went inside the aquarium there in Leon Valley and stole a horn shark."

This year, Shark Week ran July 22-29. Miss Helen was allegedly taken Saturday.

Losing the shark was devastating, Covino said.

"Every animal is important to us, and to have one taken right out of the aquarium, everybody, all of the staff, were just extremely upset."

However, Covino said he knew the heist's success would be short. In addition to the surveillance footage, the aquarium's staff had a license plate number.

"From that point on I knew that



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we were at least going to get justice if we weren't going to get the shark back," Covino said.

Monday night, the aquarium announced that employees were on their way to retrieve Miss Helen — and she was alive.



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NATION

Along with the Meth Mob

Utah cleaning crew specializes in houses contaminated by methamphetamine

BY ASHLEY STILSON

The (Provo, Utah) Daily Herald

PROVO, Utah — A hazmat suit and respirator is what Jared Herbert typically wears to work. If passersby ask what he is working on, he tells them he's just cleaning a house. Or taking care of a residential chemical contamination.

He never gives the real reason why his cleaning crew travels in unmarked vans to rip out carpet, scrub air ducts or load furniture into a dumpster.

"We keep it as discreet as we can," he said. "You want to know that someone has meth in your neighborhood, but you also don't want to know, you know?"

Herbert works as a foreman for Meth Mob, a local Provo de-contamination company focused on cleaning "meth houses." He travels across the state to clean all kinds of houses who report having high measures of meth contamination. His crew and asbestos-cleaning crews wear the same gear.

"I've done really run-down, beat-up houses in beat-up neighborhoods but then I've done multi-million dollar homes that have meth," Herbert said. "I hate to say it but, yes, it's everywhere."

Ann Atkin, the owner of Meth Mob, said her company cleans more than 100 houses every year. Every month has been busier than the previous month in the two years the company has been in business.

"I don't want this to be a fear factor," she said. "We've tested lots of homes without meth, but we've also tested a lot that have."

Dangers and damage

Methamphetamine is an addictive stimulant that can be smoked, swallowed, snorted or injected. The drug comes as a pill or a powder, though crystal meth looks like glass or shiny blueish white rocks.

Users who smoke or inject meth report feeling a brief and intense rush, while ingesting or snorting produces a long-lasting high, according to information from the Drug Enforcement Administration. Both effects release dopamine into the brain that regulate feelings of pleasure. It's sometimes used for medical treatment of attention deficit disorder or obesity.

Small amounts create increased wakefulness, decreased appetite and violent behavior, along with rapid and irregular heart rate, increased blood pressure and hyperthermia.

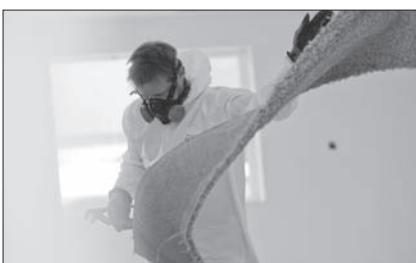
High doses can elevate body temperature to lethal levels or cause cardiovascular collapse, extreme anoxia, dental problems and memory loss. Overdosing causes death from heart attacks or organ problems generated by overheating.

To home inspector Jared Fenn, meth is a huge issue that no one seems to talk about.



EVAN COBB, THE DAILY HERALD/AP

Above and below: Jared Herbert, foreman for the Meth Mob, removes carpet from a contaminated house in Payson, Utah. Meth Mob is a decontamination company that cleans "meth houses."



Fenn said.

A common misconception is that only cooking meth causes contamination. But traces of meth get into the carpet and the walls and the air duct whenever users smoke in their homes.

In 2004, the Utah Health Department reported 107 clandestine meth labs in Utah. Ten years later, there was only one.

There are usually no obvious signs of contamination unless someone completes a sample test inside the home.

"It can be cleaned up; that's the good news," Fenn said.

As a certified inspector, Fenn conducts swab tests in at least three 10-by-10-centimeter spots in a home. If the swabs test positive at a lab for more than 1 microgram of meth per 100 square centimeters, state law requires the house should be cleaned and decontaminated.

"That's what people don't realize is that just smoking it can contaminate the house," Fenn said.

"Bathrooms are a common place for meth smokers," he said. "Laundry closets are good. Any-

where that has a fan that blows out."

He also finds small clues inside a home. Deadbolts on closets. Holes in the wall from a violent user. Any porous furniture or materials need to be thrown out before the cleaning process starts, including couches, carpets and most electronics.

"I'm adamant about carpet," Herbert said. "If it's contaminated, I can't save it. I just won't. Too much risk."

The team usually breaks the furniture they remove from the house to prevent anyone from stealing the contaminated items from their dumpster truck. The waste is taken to the dump as hazardous material where it is quickly buried in authorized areas.

"Just don't ever ask me to save a flat-screen TV because that ain't gonna happen," Herbert said with a laugh. "I tried, I already know it can't be done."

Some of the hardest homes he's cleaned belong to grandparents. In a solemn tone, he told of an incident where a grandmother had taken one of her grandchildren under her roof. Police later discovered the grandchild was smoking meth inside the home.

"That's where a lot of the controversy comes up," Fenn said.

There's little research on how meth contamination hurts residents in a home, though exposure could cause the same, though lesser, reactions that meth users experience like liver or kidney problems and lung disorders.

Young children can be particularly vulnerable if they crawl around on the carpet, Fenn said. Meth can damage their neurological development or immune system as they are a lot more susceptible to adverse effects than a healthy adult.

A growing number of Utah real estate agents are requesting meth-contamination testing, preferring to know about possible contamination before closing a deal with buyers.

"There are so many hazards that we deal with in our environment. Let's take care of the ones that we can control," Fenn said.

His team conducts a meth-contamination test on an average of one in every 15 homes they inspect. The test is cheap insurance compared with spending thousands in remodeling only to find contamination afterward.

"In meth cleanup, asbestos is the only thing that takes precedence over meth," Herbert said. "It's the only thing that can be cleaned before me."

Some companies charge more for cleaning but use softer chemicals, according to Fenn. Cheaper companies might use harsh chemicals that sometimes corrode metal hinges, sink fixtures or cabinet hardware.

Herbert's team takes about 14 days to clean an average 2,200-square-foot home. The manual labor is usually done in a week, but contamination testing before and after the cleaning takes time to process in the lab.



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WORLD

All survive crash of Mexican plane

BY CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN
Associated Press

DURANGO, Mexico — Passengers and officials say a strong burst of wind hit an Aeromexico jetliner on takeoff, moments before it crashed, leaving those aboard with mere minutes to evacuate the burning plane.

The plane tried to take off from Durango city in a severe storm Tuesday, but smacked down on its belly in a nearby field. With the engines torn off, it began to burn.

"It was really, really ugly," said Lorenzo Nunez, a passenger from Chicago who fled the plane with his two sons and wife. "It burned in a question of seconds," he told reporters, snapping his fingers for emphasis.

Survivors said the Embraer 190 plane burst into flames right after it hit the ground.

"We felt the flames coming quickly ... there was a lot of smoke," Jaquelin Flores told the newspaper El Sol.

Romulo Campuzano, head of a political party in Durango state who was on the plane, told Foro TV that both wings were on fire

as he bolted from the aircraft.

Durango state Gov. Jose Aispuro said a gust of wind hit flight AM2431, which was heading to Mexico City just as it was lifting off the tarmac, forcing the pilot to abort takeoff.

Passengers said they heard a loud noise as the plane's left wing banged to the ground, and both engines tore loose. The plane stayed upright, though, and the escape slides activated.

All 99 passengers and four crewmembers made it off the plane, but the pilot was severely injured.

About 49 people were hospitalized with injuries. Some people had burns on a quarter of their bodies, said Durango state Health Ministry spokesman Fernando Ros.

Aispuro said all were expected to live.

An Illinois priest was on the plane. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago said the Rev. Eusequio Sanchez suffered some injuries but was alert and resting.

Aispuro said it was too soon to speculate on the cause of the



COURTESY OF RED CROSS DURANGO/AP

Red Cross workers attend to airline passengers who survived a plane crash as they walk away from the crash site in a field near the airport in Durango, Mexico, on Tuesday.

crash. Mechanical failure and human error could be factors, but certainly the weather wasn't favorable. Strong wind and heavy rain with marble-sized hail lashed Durango city, even damaging hangars at the airport.

"The most important thing in the seriousness that is an accident of this nature is that there were no deaths — that's what is most encouraging for us," Aispuro said at a news conference.

After the accident, several passengers walked away from the plane before first responders arrived. Some sought medical help, while others rushed home to loved ones. Officials spent much of the afternoon tracking down survivors to ensure that everyone was accounted for.

Aeromexico Chief Executive Officer Andres Conesa described the day as "very difficult" and credited the timely reaction of

crew and passengers for the lack of fatalities.

Conesa said the passengers included 88 adults, nine children and two babies and the crew consisted of two flight attendants and two pilots.

He said the jetliner had been sent for maintenance in February and the crew was well-rested, having started their work day in Durango.

Election result delays spur riots in Zimbabwe

Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe — Rioting erupted Wednesday in Zimbabwe's capital as opposition supporters clashed with police and army troops over delays in announcing results from the presidential election, the country's first since the fall of longtime leader Robert Mugabe.

The security forces opened fire with guns, water cannons and tear gas, and protesters burned cars and threw rocks as helicopters hovered above Harare. A lifeless body was seen near the demonstration.

Armed personnel carriers ferried troops and riot police to the scene.

Dark smoke rose near the offices of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission where protesters burned tires and at least two vehicles. The commission postponed announcing results of Monday's tightly fought presidential race, pitting President Emmerson Mnangagwa against opposition leader Nelson Chamisa.

The commission said it would release vote totals "sometime" Thursday, even though it said most of the results "are here with us." Agents for all 23 candidates must verify their first, it said.

The ruling ZANU-PF party won a majority of seats in Parliament, the electoral commission said.

"The more the presidential vote is delayed, the more it calls into question the population's confidence in the election process," said former Liberian leader Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the lead observer of a U.S. monitoring mission.

"The longer [the delay in announcing the results of the presidential race], the more the issue of lack of confidence arises," European Union observer Elmar Brok said.

Both the EU and U.S. missions urged the release of the presidential results as soon as possible. The



MILITARY TANKS PATROL IN HARARE FOLLOWING DEMONSTRATIONS BY OPPOSITION PARTY SUPPORTERS IN THE CAPITAL OF ZIMBABWE ON WEDNESDAY.

EU mission questioned why presidential votes were counted first but were being announced last.

The opposition has alleged irregularities, saying voting results were not posted outside one-fifth of polling stations as required by law.

Mnangagwa's government has accused Chamisa and his supporters of inciting violence by declaring he had won. "Let me also warn such individuals and groups that no one is above the law," Home Affairs Minister Obert Mpuru said.

The violence was an unnerving reminder of the tensions that pervade this southern African nation, debilitated by Mugabe's long, repressive rule. The 94-year-old former leader had been in power since independence from white minority rule in 1980 until he was forced to resign in November after the military and ruling party turned on him.

Mnangagwa, a former deputy president who fell out with Mugabe and then took over from him, has said his showing in the election was "extremely positive" while urging people to wait for official results.

Chamisa, a lawyer and pastor who leads the opposition Movement for Democratic Change party, has claimed victory based on results supporters said they collected from agents in the field.

US cyclists killed in attack had quit jobs to bike around the world

The Washington Post

Two Americans who quit their office jobs last year to bike around the world were killed Sunday during an attack on bicyclists in Tajikistan that Islamic State claimed to have carried out.

Jay Austin and Lauren Geoghegan, both of Washington, were among four people killed during the assault, which would have been ISIS' first deadly attack in former Soviet Central Asia.

Authorities in Tajikistan did not accept the claim, instead blaming a banned political party for the attack.

The assault occurred in the countryside south of the capital, Dushanbe, when assailants rammed a car into the cyclists before pouncing on them with knives. Rene Wokke, from the Netherlands, and Markus Hummel, from Switzerland, were also killed, Tajik authorities said.

Austin and Geoghegan, both 29, were a couple who described themselves on their blog, "Simply Cycling," as "two Americans biking around the world." Geoghegan, who had not spent much time on a bicycle before 2013, and Austin, who traveled little growing up, said they decided to travel the world on wheels "because life is short and the world is big and we want to make the most out of

our youth and good health before they're gone."

A spokesman for the State Department condemned the "senseless attack on civilian cyclists," adding that Washington was ready to assist with an international investigation into the attack.

The Interior Ministry in Tajikistan said it had killed four men suspected of being involved in the attack.

Tajik officials said the attack's mastermind was the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, a peaceful opposition party whose leaders fled the country since the ruling government banned their party three years ago. But, according to photos released by the Tajik Interior Ministry, the men in the ISIS video are those killed by Tajik security forces.

"There is strong evidence that was an ISIS-inspired attack — the first such attack on foreigners by ISIS in the region, and it is therefore crucially important that Tajik authorities credibly, carefully and professionally conduct their investigation," said Steve Swerdlow, Central Asia researcher for Human Rights Watch. "The government's narrative blaming the IRPT for the attack simply doesn't add up. It's just simply shooting in the foot."

WORLD

Thieves escape with Sweden's crown jewels

By RICK NOACK
The Washington Post

Sweden's royal family still regularly captures Europe's attention with glamour, gossip and the shiny crown jewels that are put on public display whenever the occasion merits it.

That particular part of the century-old tradition will become much more difficult now after at least some of the priceless Swedish crown jewels are no longer in the hands of the royal family. On Tuesday, two thieves stole one 17th-century golden orb and two crowns from a cathedral near

Stockholm where they had been on display in an alarm-locked glass box, then escaped by speedboat into the Mälaren lake that spans 74 miles and is filled with hundreds of small islands.

Even though the royal family appears to have insurance covering the jewels, officials stressed that their value could hardly be measured or replaced. "It is not possible to put an economic value on this; it is invaluable items of national interest," police spokesman Thomas Agnevik said.

The subsequent manhunt has not yet resulted in any arrests, and authorities ap-

pear to have few indications as to where the men may have escaped.

Sweden's crown jewels haven't been worn since the early 20th century and are mainly used for display purposes these days. But all those displays, in addition to catching the eyes of thousands of visitors, seem also have caught the attention of a number of thieves.

In 2012, a friend of the royal family was convicted of stealing royal jewels worth more than \$120,000, which he had purloined from a private apartment belonging to Princess Christina, the sister of King

Carl XVI Gustaf. At the time, the thief was able to sell only some of the stolen valuables, throwing the rest of the stolen goods off a bridge.

The two men behind this week's theft may face similar challenges, officials said.

"What usually happens with this type of object is that they are recovered sooner or later, because there are very few people who are prepared to handle such items," Agnevik was quoted as saying by Swedish media Tuesday.

"We have high hopes of getting them back," he said.

Brazilian gang seeks to entice recruits

By MARINA LOPES
The Washington Post

SAO PAULO — In an attempt to recruit more members, Brazil's largest gang is taking a page from after-school programs and soccer teams. The Primeiro Comando da Capital cartel, or PCC, which boasts about 30,000 members across the country, has created a big-brother program and waived a \$250 monthly membership fee. The gang hopes to recruit 30 new members a day to wage a "war" on rival gangs.

Bloodthirsty and ruthless, the PCC has rapidly branched out from its base in São Paulo to other Brazilian states, angering rival gangs, which have seen their membership numbers fall. Infamously business-savvy, the group has turned to innovative marketing techniques to shore up its numbers as gang tensions reach a boiling point. The group's new "adopt a brother" campaign, for example, urges members to invite at least one friend to join the organization.

Sao Paulo police learned about the recruiting techniques through a wiretap as part of an investigation of the PCC. The probe offers a rare look into the secretive group, which controls Brazil's cocaine market and many of its prisons. In one wire-tapped conversation, PCC members said they are concerned that they don't have the numbers to challenge local gangs in remote states. "How are we going to fight a war against them?" asked one, identified as Gilmar. "We can't, it's not yet time."

No matter the gang's concern about numbers, the PCC has been responsive for what police call a "true genocide" of both rivals and its own straying members in Brazil over the past decade.

Police estimate that the group killed more than 400 people in the latter half of 2017 alone. According to police, the group's leaders ordered that all murders be photographed or recorded.



A toilet block, built by villagers with support from Sulabh International Social Service Organisation, stands on the roof of a house in Hirmtala village, Haryana, India, in 2015

PRASHANTH VISHWANATHAN/Bloomberg

India's goal: Be flush with toilets

By PR SANJAI
Bloomberg

India is on the greatest toilet-building spree in human history, and it's a windfall for companies.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's \$20 billion "Clean India" mission aims to construct 111 million latrines in five years.

Besides promising to improve the health, safety and dignity of hundreds of millions of Indians, the national hygiene drive has spurred an 81 percent jump in sales of concrete building materials and a 48 percent increase in bathroom and sanitaryware sales, according to Euromonitor International.

That's benefiting firms from Tata Group, the nation's largest conglomerate, to cleaning products maker Reckitt Benckiser Group.

Almost 80 million household toilets are estimated to have been built since Modi's 2014 pledge to ensure universal sanitation coverage by October 2019, which will mark 150 years since the birth of independence leader Mahatma Gandhi. The scale-up of latrines and a nationwide campaign to

encourage their use is driving a market for toilet-related products and services that's predicted to double to \$62 billion by 2021.

"It's the biggest, most successful behavioral change campaign in the world," said Val Curtis, director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine's Environmental Health Group, who has worked on the program in India. "Every time I go there, I feel like I can't sit down for weeks after because I'm excited about what they're doing. It's incredible."

Bollywood celebrity Akshay Kumar, star of the sanitation-promoting movie "Toilet: Ek Prem Katha" (or "Toilet: A Love Story"), was appointed brand ambassador last month for Harpic, the bowl cleaner made by Reckitt Benckiser. The Slough, England-based company, which also sells the disinfectant Dettol, dominates the toilet care market in India, with sales climbing 11 percent to \$105.7 million last year, Euromonitor data show.

"We are one of the most trusted brands in India, and we've always managed to outperform the market with Dettol," Rakesh Kapoor,

Reckitt Benckiser's India-born chief executive officer, said on a conference call in April. The company has been able to increase awareness of its products by working with open-defecation-free communities and households to promote sanitation and hygiene.

That's a common theme across

suppliers of home care products, according to Soumya Adiraju, a research analyst at Euromonitor in Bengaluru. For example, Hindustan Unilever Ltd. entered the low-cost toilet cleaner market with a new powdered product and has been trying to make toilets accessible and affordable through its Domex Toilet Academy.

Companies are investing heavily on spreading awareness about better hygiene products, aiding the penetration of home care products in India, which is still low by global standards, Adiraju said in an email.

The "Clean India" mission has had a "largely positive" impact on suppliers of sanitaryware and tiles, sales of which are predicted to expand about 11 percent annually through 2022, according to Adiraju.

Danish ban on garments covering face now in effect

By JAN M. OLSEN
Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — Supporters and opponents of a ban on garments covering the face, including Islamic veils such as the niqab or burqa, clashed verbally Wednesday as the law took effect.

Marcus Knuth, of the ruling liberal party Venstre, said the dress worn by some conservative Muslim women is "strongly oppressive."

Sasha Andersen, of the "Party Rebels" activist group, held a demonstration later in the day against what they called on Wednesday a "discriminatory" measure against a minority group. Groups that back the ban also planned to rally.

Danish lawmakers approved the law in May, which was presented by the center-right governing coalition that is known for tightening asylum and immigration rules in recent years. In 2016, Denmark also adopted a law requiring newly arrived asylum seekers to hand over valuables such as jewelry and gold to help pay for their stays in the country.

Other European countries have similar bans, claiming they are not aimed at any religion in particular and don't ban headscarves, turbans or the traditional Jewish skull cap.

Popularly known as the "Burqa Ban," it is mostly seen as being directed at the niqab and burqa. Few Muslim women in Denmark wear such full-face veils.

The law allows people to cover their face when there is a "recognizable purpose" like cold weather or complying with other legal requirements, such as using motorcycle helmets required under Danish traffic rules.

First-time offenders risk a fine of 1,000 kroner, or \$157. Repeat offenses could trigger fines of up to 10,000 kroner or a jail sentence of up to six months.

Anyone forcing a person to wear garments covering the face by using force or threats can be fined or face up to two years in prison.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man accused of hammer attack on ex-girlfriend

OR Klamath Falls — Police arrested a Klamath Falls man accused of striking people with a hammer and nearly running over another person with a vehicle.

Klamath Falls police alleged in a news release that William Aune, 60, broke into his ex-girlfriend's house Saturday night and struck the woman and her brother with a hammer. Both were seriously hurt.

He then is accused of stealing a vehicle from one of the victims and trying to hit someone standing in the street. He continued driving to another house, where he tried to hit another person with the hammer, police alleged.

Police arrested Aune on that block. He was booked into jail on charges of attempted murder, assault and other crimes. It's unknown if he has a lawyer.

Woman suspected of stealing ambulance hurt

TX HOUSTON — Police said a woman suspected of stealing an unoccupied ambulance parked at a Houston hospital was seriously hurt after rolling the emergency vehicle.

Houston police are trying to determine why the woman got into the Acute Medical Services ambulance early Monday and drove away from Ben Taub Hospital. Police spokeswoman Jodi Silva said investigators don't believe the woman was a patient.

The ambulance wrecked on a Houston freeway about 45 minutes after being reported stolen.

Silva said the suspect, who was trapped under the vehicle, suffered severe injuries and was transported back to Ben Taub Hospital.

Baseball fans get tattoos, free tickets

MI BATTLE CREEK — Fans of the Battle Creek Bombers lined up overnight to get a free Bombers tattoo — and free tickets for life to watch the baseball team.

The Battle Creek Enquirer reported the tattoos were part of a Bombers Tattoo Day promotion for the southern Michigan team that plays in the Northwoods League and features top college players. They were inked to mark the team's 12th year in Battle Creek.

Pairs of lifelong tickets went to the first 12 fans to participate.

Archaeologists to dig for British Colonial artifacts

ME BRISTOL — Archaeologists will be excavating part of a state historic site in Maine to try to uncover artifacts related to British Colonial forts.

The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry says the digging will last until Aug. 10 at Colonial Pemaquid State Historic Site. Three British Colonial forts were built on the site between the 1670s and

THE CENSUS

\$26.4K

The amount paid at auction for a rare draft poster for the "Star Wars" sequel "The Empire Strikes Back." Heritage Auctions said a long-time pop culture collector who wished to remain anonymous made the winning bid Sunday in the Dallas auction. Grey Smith, Heritage's director of vintage posters, said the draft poster for the 1980 movie is unique because it shows Roger Kastel's complete artwork in the original color palette.



WILFREDO LEE/AP

Practice jump

Kimberly Lopez, left, and Kamila Pereda, both 12, practice jumping rope before the start of the Summer Camp Jump Rope Championship put on by the Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department at Tamiami Park in Miami on Tuesday. Participants competed for trophies in different age groups in events that included single rope, long-rope and freestyle.

the 1720s.

Last year's dig uncovered a piece of a centuries-old cannon and other items.

Longtime lighthouse caretaker moving on

NY MONTAUK — After 31 years of living in a lighthouse for free, Margaret Winski is giving up the best view on Long Island and moving to Maine.

The New York Times reported the 62-year-old known as Marge has been living in the 222-year-old Montauk Lighthouse since April 1987, when the U.S. Coast Guard moved out of the property on the island's eastern end and turned it over to the Montauk Historical Society.

She lived at the lighthouse for free but the caretaker's job came with no pay, so she worked during the day at the local post office for 30 years.

She's being replaced by Joseph Gavioila, 63, a Montauk businessman and member of the lighthouse board.

Custodian finds WWII letter, returns it

IL ELGIN — A Post Office custodian in suburban Chicago returned a World War II letter he recently found while moving storage cabinets to the son of the soldier who wrote it in 1944 from France.

Elgin's Courier-News reported Army veteran Edward Gathman kept the letter as a memento while working at the Post Office. He left the Elgin job in 1973 and died in 2007 at age 95.

Custodian Thomas Caulfield said it fell out when a cabinet's doors popped open. He used social media to locate Gathman's son, Bruce Gathman, in South Carolina.

The letter is addressed to Gathman's wife and son.

Snorkeler finds college ring missing 23 years

FL PORT ST. LUCIE — A snorkeler swimming off Florida's Atlantic coast found a

college ring that had been missing for more than two decades and returned it to its owner.

Amateur treasure hunter Stephen Zabruskas found the 1995 Florida State University ring in July while snorkeling off Hutchinson Island.

The ring had the name of Elizabeth Engel engraved on it.

A friend heard about the snorkeling discovery and contacted the ring's owner, now known as Elizabeth Engel-Petric.

On Friday, Engel-Petric, Zabruskas and their families met at a doughnut shop in Port St. Lucie where the snorkeler gave the ring to its owner.

Airport adds giant maple jugs display

VT BURLINTON — Burlington International Airport has added a display of 7-foot-tall maple syrup jugs to remind travelers they can purchase the Vermont staple online instead of losing it at airport security.

The jugs will be accompanied by a 7-foot-long block of cedar

cheese.

Dakin Farms and Cabot Creamery sponsored the replicas.

The companies are promoting an online website where people can buy Vermont food shipped to their home in hopes that fewer travelers will have their maple syrup taken by airport security for being larger than the allotted 3.4 ounces.

Police: Man breaks into dealership, steals car

NH MERRIMACK — Police in New Hampshire accused a man of breaking into an auto dealership, defecating on the floor and stealing a car.

Christopher Rosati, 26, was arrested on charges of burglary, theft, criminal mischief and breach of bail conditions.

Police said Rosati defecated on the floor and had tried to gain entry into the safe before getting into a car and driving away. As he made his getaway, he struck other cars in the lot.

From wire reports

FACES



Lopez is newest Michael Jackson Video Vanguard honoree

From wire reports

Jennifer Lopez is MTV's next Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award recipient, the network announced Tuesday. She'll get the honor at the Video Music Awards this month.

Lopez is also set to perform at the VMAs, where she's twice-nominated this year for her single "Dinero," in the collaboration and Latin categories. She's also won two VMAs out of 21 prior nominations.

In recent years, winners have included Pink, Rihanna, Kanye West, Beyoncé, Justin Timberlake and Britney Spears. Jackson himself took home the honor in 1988, then known simply as the Vanguard Award, and in 1991 his name was added to the honor.

The MTV VMAs will air Aug. 20 from Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

Lovato's song about relapsing re-enters Billboard chart

Demi Lovato's song about relapsing has re-entered the Billboard chart a week after she was hospitalized for a reported overdose.

"Sober," released last month, jumped to No. 55 this week on the Billboard Hot 100 chart after being absent from the chart last week. Nielsen Music says "Sober" earned 7.2 million streams and sold 18,000 tracks in the tracking week ending July 26. Lovato was hospitalized July 24.

"Sober" turned heads when it was released since Lovato, 25, had celebrated six years of sobriety in March. On the song she sings: "Momma, I'm so sorry I'm not sober anymore/And daddy please forgive me for the drinks spilled on the floor."

Lovato's "Solo," a collaboration with British electronic group Clean Bandit,



MTV announced Tuesday that Jennifer Lopez would receive the Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award later this month at Radio City Music Hall in New York. Lopez will also perform at the awards.

rose to No. 61 on the Hot 100 this week.

House Speaker uncovers Jewish roots on PBS show

House Speaker Paul Ryan was surprised and proud to find out he has Jewish roots.

The Wisconsin Republican discovered his family history while filming a segment for the upcoming season of the PBS series "Finding Your Roots With Henry Louis Gates Jr."

Gates says he traced Ryan's heritage back to his 10th great-grandfather born in 1531 in Germany. The research showed Ryan is 3 percent Ashkenazi Jewish, and Gates says the news "about knocked his head off."

Also featured on the show's fifth season debuting in January is Sen. Marco Rubio,

Tiffany Haddish loving her new ride, especially the price

Tiffany Haddish is feeling very recharged these days — thanks to her new car.

The comedian is enjoying her Tesla Model X, a high-end electric vehicle that was a gift from Tyler Perry.

"I can feel the electricity going through my body, feel like I'm getting recharged myself," Haddish said Monday from the red carpet of Spike Lee's "BlackKKKlan." "I think the spirit of Nikola Tesla is going through my feet as I'm driving."

Last month, Perry, who cast Haddish in his upcoming comedy "Nobody's Fool," surprised the comedian with the car. Haddish says her longest ride has lasted "about four hours."

"It rides smooth. It's real quiet. It's perfect for stalking. I've got white seats, so I make sure I don't have nothing on," Haddish joked.

Associated Press

Tiffany Haddish attends the premiere of "BlackKKKlan" on Monday in New York.

ANDY KROPA, INVISION/AP

TELEVISION NEWS

A roundup of news from the Television Critics Association summer meeting, at which TV networks and streaming services are presenting details on upcoming programs.

PBS to air 'Won't You Be My Neighbor?' documentary

With Fred Rogers' legacy back in the spotlight, PBS wants viewers to remember that public television was the longtime home of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood."

PBS stations will air the acclaimed documentary "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" as part of the "Independent Lens" showcase. The film has earned more than \$20 million in its eight weeks in theaters, a blockbuster by documentary standards.

Rogers' "powerful" approach to children's programming is an ongoing influence at PBS, said Paula Kerger, president and CEO of the Public Broadcasting Service.

One direct link: The animated series "Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood," from creator Daniel Angella Santomero and the Fred Rogers Co.

This year is the 50th anniversary of "Mister Rogers'" TV debut. An airdate for "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" wasn't announced.

It's full steam ahead for White

Betty White sees no point in slowing down at age 96, as long as her phone keeps ringing with offers to work.

The actress, known for her roles in "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and "The Golden Girls," is marking her 80th year in show business with a PBS special that looks at her life and career.

Moore, Georgia Engel and Gavin MacLeod are among those sharing insights in "Betty White: First Lady of Television," which debuts Aug. 21. Moore's appearance in the special was the last interview she did before her death last year, Steve Boettcher, the special's co-director and producer, said.

The special shows White at work, at home and interacting with friends. She is the lone living star from "The Golden Girls."

White wasn't a part of the panel discussion at a TV critics meeting on Tuesday.

Tap dancer Arthur Duncan credits White with launching his career by featuring him on her daily talk show in the mid-1950s. The show received letters complaining about Duncan's presence as a black performer.

White's response was to have Duncan every chance she could. He later went on to "The Lawrence Welk Show," becoming the first black regular on a TV variety show.

"She was probably one of the nicest, greatest, greatest people I've had the chance to meet in my life," said Duncan, now 84. "Whenever she walked into a room, it lit up."

A look back at Woodstock

A 50th anniversary look at Woodstock and a Ken Burns series on the human genome will be among PBS' upcoming documentaries, the public TV service said Monday.

The two-hour documentary on Woodstock will air in 2019 and will examine the events that led up to the three-day festival that would become one of the defining moments of the tumultuous 1960s.

The documentary will be part of PBS' "American Experience" series and is being directed by Barak Goodman, who is teaming up with Burns on the genome series. "The Genome: An Intimate History" will be a three-hour documentary series based on a book of the same name by Siddhartha Mukherjee. PBS says the series will weave science, social history and "personal stories" to explain what we know about human genetics, including disease and the ethical debates over gene editing. It is scheduled to air in 2020.

From The Associated Press

BUSINESS/WEATHER

30M taxpayers to owe more due to low withholding

By MARCY GORDON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional auditors say about 30 million people — 21 percent of U.S. taxpayers — will have to come up with more money to pay their 2018 taxes next year because their employers withheld too little from their paychecks under government tables keyed to the new tax law.

New withholding tables for employers were put together by the government early this year. About 30 million workers received pay that was "under-withheld" — making their paychecks bigger this year but bringing a larger bill at tax time next spring,

according to the Government Accountability Office's report.

About 27 million taxpayers would have been affected even if the new law hadn't been enacted. The changes, however, added an estimated 3 million to that number.

Millions of American workers started getting faster paychecks early this year, as employers withheld less money in anticipation of lower income taxes under the law. According to the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center, a middle-income household should on average get a \$930 tax cut this year, lifting its after-tax income by 1.6 percent.

But many taxpayers will end up paying more, because of complications in the new tax law that

may not have been taken into account by employers in estimating workers' tax obligations.

The Treasury Department and the IRS are responsible for updating the tax withholding tables each year. Highlighting the importance of accurate tables, the GAO said Treasury and the IRS currently don't lay out in writing their roles and responsibilities for annual updates. The auditors recommended that they do so, in accordance with federal standards for internal controls.

Treasury and the IRS agreed with that recommendation, the report said.

Treasury and the IRS "worked to update withholding tables, worksheets and instructions,"

Jeffrey Tribiano, IRS deputy commissioner for operations support, said in a letter to the GAO responding to the report. He noted the "tight time constraints" that the agencies worked under.

The report by the independent auditors was requested in January by the senior Democrats on the Senate and House tax-writing committees: Sen. Ron Wyden, of Oregon, and Rep. Richard Neal, of Massachusetts. They asked the GAO to analyze the withholding tables under the new Republican tax law to make sure workers' paychecks weren't being widely under-withheld.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, speaking at a White House press briefing early this

year, dismissed that notion as "ridiculous."

Wyden on Tuesday called the GAO's report "an alarm bell for the nearly 30 million households that are expected to owe more money come tax time this spring."

Tax experts suggest that all taxpayers look at the online tax withholding calculator issued by the IRS in February, to ensure they are having the correct amount withheld. Taxpayers also should update the information on their W-4 forms, experts say.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

Euro (costs (Aug. 2))	\$1.986
Dollar buys (Aug. 2)	€0.8343
British pound	€1.122
Chinese yuan	€0.0626
Japan's yen (Aug. 2)	108.00
South Korean won (Aug. 2)	1,089.00

Commercial rates

Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3777
British pound	£1.312
Chinese yuan	¥0.0626
Denmark (Krone)	6.8118
Egypt (Pound)	£0.3797
Hong Kong (Dollar)	0.7856
India (Rupee)	₹74.99
Israel (Shekel)	₪3.6068
Japan (Yen)	¥11.92
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3777
Malta (Euro)	€0.6753
Philippines (Peso)	₱52.98
Poland (Złoty)	zł4.365
Qatar (Riyal)	QR3.6500
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3618
South Korea (Won)	₩1,089.00
Spain (Euro)	€0.9923
Thailand (Bath)	฿33.15
Turkey (New Lira)	4.9225

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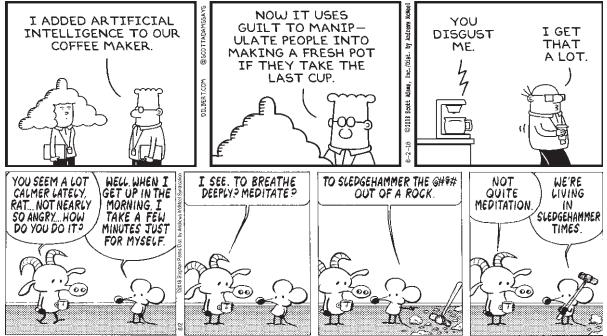
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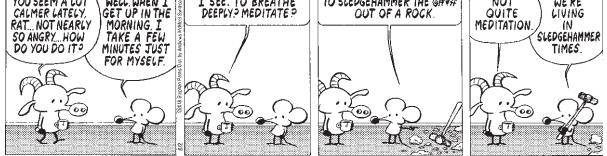
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Pearls Before Swine



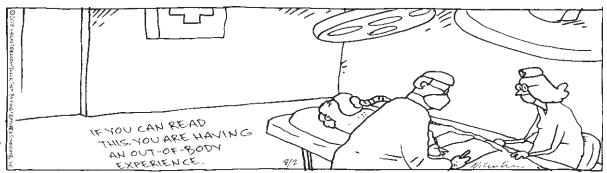
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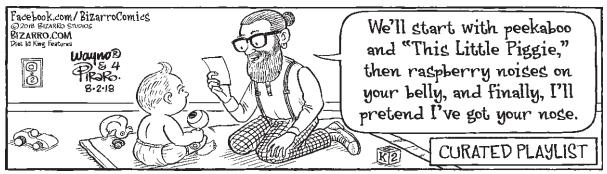
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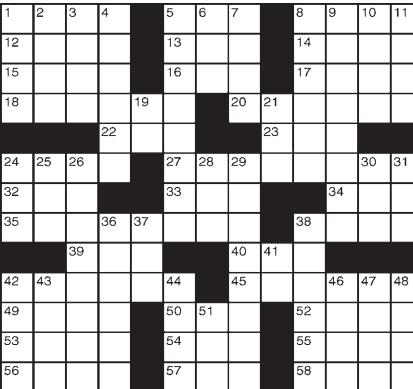
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

1 Chart toppers
 5 Great weight
 8 Lovers' quarrel
 12 Utah city
 13 Caviar base
 14 Highly rated
 15 Saintly ring
 16 "Caught ya!"
 17 Dorm alternative
 18 Borrowed
 20 Nebraska river
 22 LPs' successors
 23 Capote nickname
 24 Uttered "alas"
 27 Renaissance part-song
 32 Nabokov novel
 33 Fury
 34 Get older
 35 Of the Milky Way
 38 Mailbox feature
 39 Flamenco cheer
 40 AOL, for one
 42 More active
 45 Dry white wines
 49 Rue the run
 50 "—Blue?"
 52 Anger
 53 Hidden valley
 54 Dallas hoopster, briefly

25 Actress Lupino
 26 Rubber overshoes
 28 "Entourage" agent
 29 Resolve
 30 Previously
 31 Allow
 36 Extraterrestrials
 37 Bee follower
 38 Meager
 41 Therefore
 42 Satchels
 43 Bruins' sch.
 44 Wheelchair access
 46 Cong
 47 Panache
 48 Antitoxins
 51 —tail (cocktail)

Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	A	R	V	A	N	C	H	A	T
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CRYPTOQUIP

S I Q Z T C H L U Q B Z B W M
 D O Q R T V L G L D B M W L G R I Q
 T S L Q D I W U J I ' D I W T V Q O B D L :
 T D J B S C I T Q G V H B S C I T Q G .
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Announcements 040**SCAM FADS**

Classifieds: scams can target both sellers and buyers with classifieds advertisements.

Be aware of the common red flags.

Some of the latest Scam fads are:

- Vehicle buyers wanting to buy sight unseen and have the vehicle shipped through an agent using PayPal.
- People saying Free Dog (different breeds) for adoption.

Automotive 140**SELLER BEWARE**

Individuals placing classified advertising should use discretion in concluding the sale of their property. Not all potential buyers are reputable or honest. Stars and Stripes suggests that you take precautions to ensure that potential buyers are reputable and will be able to fulfill the terms of the sale. Stars and Stripes is not liable for the contractual relationship between sellers and buyers of merchandise advertised in the newspaper or on the web site.

Announcements 040**Jobs Offered 630**

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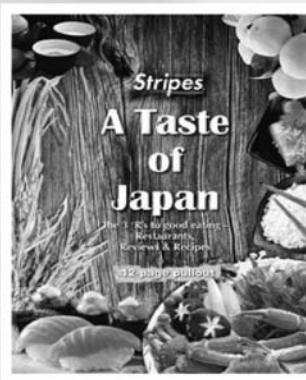
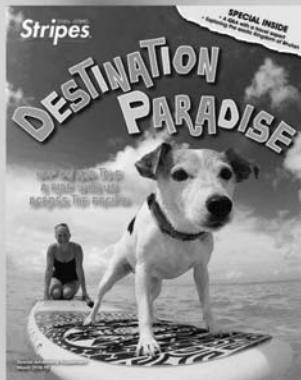
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SCOREBOARD

Sports
on AFN

Go to the American Forces Network website for the most up-to-date TV schedules.
myafn.net

Pro football

NFL preseas

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	PW	PA
Buffalo	0	0	0.000	0	0
Miami	0	0	0.000	0	0
New England	0	0	0.000	0	0
N.Y. Jets	0	0	0.000	0	0
Houston	0	0	0.000	0	0
Indianapolis	0	0	0.000	0	0
Jacksonville	0	0	0.000	0	0
Tennessee	0	0	0.000	0	0
North					
Baltimore	0	0	0.000	0	0
Cleveland	0	0	0.000	0	0
Pittsburgh	0	0	0.000	0	0
Denver	0	0	0.000	0	0
Kansas City	0	0	0.000	0	0
L.A. Chargers	0	0	0.000	0	0
East					
Dallas	0	0	0.000	0	0
N.Y. Giants	0	0	0.000	0	0
Philadelphia	0	0	0.000	0	0
Washington	0	0	0.000	0	0
South					
Atlanta	0	0	0.000	0	0
Carolina	0	0	0.000	0	0
New Orleans	0	0	0.000	0	0
Tampa Bay	0	0	0.000	0	0
North					
Chicago	0	0	0.000	0	0
Green Bay	0	0	0.000	0	0
Minnesota	0	0	0.000	0	0
Arizona	0	0	0.000	0	0
L.A. Rams	0	0	0.000	0	0
San Francisco	0	0	0.000	0	0
Seattle	0	0	0.000	0	0
West					
Thursday's game					
Chicago vs. L.A. Rams	at				
Tuesday, Aug. 7					
Pittsburgh at Philadelphia					
New Orleans at Jacksonville					
Carolina at N.Y. Giants					
Chicago at Cincinnati					
Tampa Bay at Miami					
L.A. Rams at Baltimore					
Washington at Green Bay					
Houston at Kansas City					
Indianapolis at Seattle					
Seattle at San Francisco					
Friday, Aug. 10					
Atlanta at New England					
Detroit at Oakland					
Saturday, Aug. 11					
Minnesota at Denver					
L.A. Chargers at Arizona					
NFL calendar					
Aug. 2 — Hall of Fame game, Chicago					
vs. Buffalo at Cleveland, Ohio					
Aug. 4 — Fall for Fame induction ceremony, Canton, Ohio					
Sept. 9-13 — First weekend of pre-season					
Sept. 1 — Final countdown to 53-man roster					
Sept. 5 — Regular season opens: Atlanta at Philadelphia					
Sept. 8-10 — First weekend of regular season					
Oct. 16-17 — Fall owners meeting, New York					
Oct. 30 — Trading deadline.					

Pro basketball

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	PW	GB
Atlanta	16	10	0.571	1	0
Washington	15	11	0.577	1	0
Connecticut	14	12	0.545	1	0
Chicago	10	17	0.370	0	0
New York	7	18	0.280	0	0
Indiana	3	15	0.115	0	0
WESTERN CONFERENCE					
Seattle	9	16	0.360	0	0
Minnesota	15	10	0.600	4	0
Los Angeles	15	11	0.577	4	0
Phoenix	15	12	0.545	0	0
Dallas	14	12	0.538	0	0
Las Vegas	12	13	0.480	7	0
Tuesday's games					
Washington at Atlanta					
Chicago at Dallas					
New York at Connecticut					
Phoenix at Indiana					
Thursday's games					
Dallas at Indiana					
Minnesota at Los Angeles					
Friday's games					
Las Vegas at Washington					
Chicago at Indiana					
Minnesota at Seattle					

Tuesday's games

Wednesday's games

Thursday's games

Friday's games

Saturday's games

Sunday's Match

Final

Monday's games

Tuesday's games

Wednesday's games

Thursday's games

Friday's games

Saturday's games

Sunday's Match

Final

Monday's games

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Saturday's games

Sunday's Match

MLB

Dozier, Archer among trades made at deadline

By BEN WALKER
Associated Press

For Brian Dozier, getting traded meant a dash to the airport and a long trip to Dodger Stadium. For Jake Diekman, it was a lot easier — he simply rode the bullpen cart from one clubhouse to the other at Chase Field.

Chris Archer, Jonathan Schoop and a bunch of relievers moved on deadline day, a flurry of 15 swaps Tuesday before time ran out to make deals without waivers.

The trade market kept spinning at a dizzying pace. Every team except San Francisco made at least one deal since the All-Star Game, with Tampa Bay swinging seven.

Archer, a two-time All-Star, hugged teammates at Tropicana Field before heading to Pittsburgh. He is 3-5 with a 4.31 ERA in 17 starts this season, and joins a Pirates club that has pushed back into the playoff race even after trading away Gerrit Cole and Andrew McCutchen in the offseason.

"They're super-hot right now and they want me," Archer said. "I'm excited to be part of the organization that wants me, part of a rich baseball history, a hard-working community. I can't wait to get there."

The Rays sent former All-Star catcher Wilson Ramos to NL East-leading Philadelphia, while Leonys Martin, Kevin Gausman and Cameron Maybin also switched sides as contenders tweaked their rosters.

And why not? All but four National League teams began the day within 5½ games of a playoff spot. The American League is more spread out — division leaders Boston, Cleveland and Houston have been busy.

Manny Machado, Cole Hamels, Zach Britton, Mike Moustakas and Ian Kinsler were among the big names that moved earlier this month.

Bryce Harper, Jacob deGrom, J.T. Realmuto and McCutchen

had been mentioned in trade speculation, but stayed put.

"I think whenever you hear your name or see your name on stuff, you always wonder. But I think that's just the business side of the game," Harper said. "It's part of the game."

One of Harper's teammates packed up.

Exactly a year after getting traded from Minnesota to Washington, reliever Brandon Kintzler was part of another deadline deal. This time, the Nationals sent him to the NL Central-leading Chicago Cubs.

"I thought they were joking. I figured it's not April's Fools. They called me in, I said, 'Am I traded?' They said yeah," Kintzler said.

An All-Star last year, Kintzler turns 34 on Wednesday.

"Birthdays again tomorrow, so I'm traveling on my birthday again, so that's great. It is what it is," he said.

Dozier had been a fixture in Minnesota's lineup for years. But the Twins dipped this season, and they sent the power-hitting second baseman to the NL West-leading Los Angeles Dodgers for infielder Logan Forsythe and two minor leaguers.

Rather than starting at Target Field in Minneapolis, the 31-year-old Dozier hustled to join his new club as it hosted Milwaukee. He's now part of a revamped infield for the defending NL West champion Dodgers, who added Machado two weeks ago.

"Brian's brand here in Minnesota, I don't know if you can get much better than that," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "Everything that he's done for the community and the way that he's played the game, he's set a great example for our young guys throughout, and you're going to miss a guy like that."

The New York Mets had discussions about their talent-rich young pitchers, who include deGrom, Noah Syndergaard and

Zack Wheeler.

"We were not going to move those players unless it involved considerable talent coming back in our direction," assistant general manager John Ricco said.

Diekman definitely was on the go.

The 31-year-old lefty struck out two while pitching for Texas on Monday night in a win at Arizona. The Diamondbacks reacquired reliever Brad Ziegler from Miami earlier Tuesday, then boosted their bullpen by getting Diekman from the Rangers.

Wanting to make Diekman's move easy, the Diamondbacks offered the services of the bullpen cart used to ferry relievers into the game.

"They asked and I was like, 'Yeah, I don't want to carry all of my stuff,'" Diekman said.

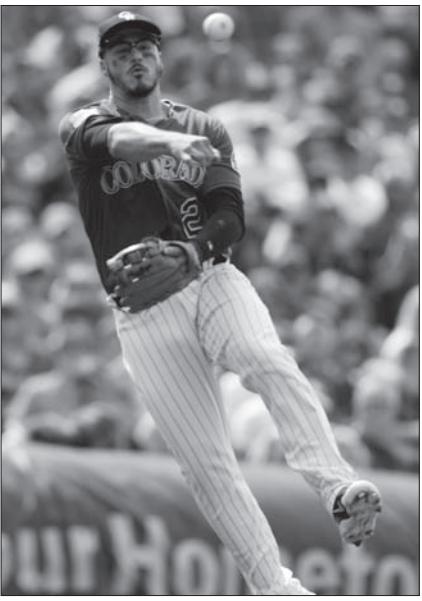
Adam Jones chose to stay with the league-worst Orioles, using his contractual right to block a trade from a team dealing veterans and going into a rebuilding mode.

"It's my decision. It's my life," Jones said following Tuesday night's 6-3 loss to the New York Yankees. "No one's going to tell me what to do. I earned every single bit of it. People before me fought vigorously, tirelessly, to get rights like this."

A five-time All-Star who can become a free agent after the season, Jones for now chose to remain with the club where he's spent the past 11 seasons. He said he doesn't care about criticism of his decision.

"Well here's the thing about society, everyone thinks that they know what's best for the next person," the 32-year-old said. "Now if someone wants to pay all my bills, trust me, they can tell me what to do. But until then, shut the hell up."

AP Baseball Writers Ronald Blum, AP Sports Writers Dave Campbell and Bob Baum and AP freelance writers Mark Didier and Harvey Valentine contributed to this report.



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Colorado Rockies third baseman Nolan Arenado, a lifetime .292 hitter, has raised his game a notch this season by spending time analyzing game film to better understand opposing pitchers.

Watch: Desire for playoff return fuels 3B's prep work

FROM BACK PAGE

That is, if a long-term deal isn't reached. His worth could be directly impacted through deals reached for Bryce Harper and Manny Machado, two of the headliners in the free-agency class this offseason.

Arenado's desire is no secret — play for an organization that contends year in and out. The Rockies have never won the NL West.

"I didn't say I never wanted to be here. That's never came out of my mouth once," Arenado said. "People like to make a story. I don't like losing. I don't like to lose. I want to win. That is the truth. If there's any story, that's the main story. I want to win. I don't want to be part of a losing team."

A lifetime .292 hitter, Arenado has raised his game another notch this season by doing more homework, which includes understanding how pitchers might attack him.

He's film preparation.

In between watching Tarantino movies — Arenado's latest was "Django Unchained" — he studies up hurlers to analyze their stuff. About 10 to 15 minutes between bites of lunch.

"There are times in years past, I'd strike out on a pitch and be like, 'I didn't know he had that,'"

said Arenado, whose younger brother, Jonah, is a third baseman in the Giants' organization and his cousin, Ross Fuentes, an infielder in the Rockies' system. "Now, I'm not letting that happen anymore. If I strike out, it's just because he beat me. I don't want to be last up there."

Early on this season, pitchers weren't giving him much to hit. They were more willing to face Carlos Gonzalez or Trevor Story batting behind him than mess around with Arenado.

With Gonzalez and Story heating up, Arenado is seeing more juicy pitches.

Arenado prides himself on being a good teammate. Like offering hitting advice and tips to Story, who appeared in his first All-Star Game last month.

"He's a great example for me and helped me a lot," Story said.

Still, Arenado isn't afraid to speak his mind. Like when the team was struggling.

That's just how he's wired.

"When you've lost for so long, it kind of wears you down," Arenado said. "Once you get that little taste of winning like we did last year, it changed my game in a way, my life in a way as a baseball player. The champagne shower — being with the boys for six months and doing something special like that, it's something you want to experience again and again."



STEVE NEESUM/AP

Pitcher Chris Archer, right, says goodbye to former Tampa Bay teammates Mallex Smith, left, and Blake Snell, center, in the bullpen after he was traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates Tuesday.

AUTO RACING/SPORTS BRIEFS/NBA

Commentary

NASCAR in state of denial

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The sky is not falling on NASCAR, its top executives insist, and a cheerier disposition could go a long way in lifting the black clouds surrounding the series.

That is a paraphrase of the message NASCAR chief operating officer Steve Phelps delivered at Pocono Raceway during a weekend sponsorship celebration. Phelps was presenting good news — that Camping World will continue as sponsor

of the Truck Series through 2022 under Gander Outdoors branding — but his singular announcement couldn't mask the larger issues facing

NASCAR.

Phelps argued otherwise.

"I think this industry tends to focus on the negative," Phelps said. "I'm not really sure why."

Because television ratings continue to slide, and seventh-place NASCAR champion Jimmie Johnson is seeking a new sponsor. Because the same three drivers have combined to win 16 of 21 Cup races this season, and the tracks and the schedule are stale. Because the France family is reportedly interested in selling NASCAR and Chairman Brian France has yet to address the report straight-on and has instead stated only that his family is committed to running the series.

Phelps' position mirrored the message France delivered last week when he called SiriusXM NASCAR Radio and was asked what he would tell fans about "the state of their NASCAR right now."

"Well, I think we are having a good year," France said. "Things are changing a lot in sports, and that's a given, with how



DERIK HAMILTON/AP

Bubba Wallace escaped injury Sunday after a violent collision at Pocono Raceway that cracked a section of the SAFER barrier. Safety has improved dramatically since Dale Earnhardt was killed in 2001 during the Daytona 500.

things are being consumed. More digital, more this, more that, and we're trying to meet their needs in terms of how they take in NASCAR and it is terrific. We've got unbelievable fans and we are very proud of that."

France could have addressed the sale rumors when Reuters first issued its report in May. But he didn't, and nearly three months later still has not stated whether NASCAR is or is not for sale. He doesn't publicly say much of anything anymore, which is his right. But someone needs to be leading the cheers and if the fans only focus on the negative it is because NASCAR isn't doing a good enough job of promoting the positives.

There are some areas to crow about, too:

■ Bubba Wallace was not injured Sunday in a violent collision at Pocono that cracked a section of the energy-absorbing SAFER barrier. Upgrades to safety have been an ongoing process since Dale Earnhardt's 2001 fatal accident, and after Kyle Busch broke both his legs in a 2015 accident at Daytona, additional SAFER barriers have been built into almost every track on the circuit. Wrecks are one of the lures of NASCAR and because they are so fre-

quent, it is easy to get desensitized to the danger. Wallace's wreck was a reminder it is still a deadly sport, and NASCAR has worked diligently to lessen the risks.

■ Three series champions are present racing each other each week for the Cup title. Busch and Kevin Harvick have six wins each, while reigning NASCAR champion Martin Truex Jr. has four. Only four other drivers have been to victory lane this season, and the last three races have gone to Truex, Harvick and Busch, in that order. Some may argue the Big 3 winning each week is getting old, but it is a chess match between a Ford and two Toyota teams unlike anything that's been seen since the so-called "good 'ol days" of NASCAR.

■ Although they aren't racing for wins right now, younger drivers are in the play-off mix and seven drivers not considered veterans are currently in the top 16 in the standings. At Pocono, five "Young Guns" finished in the top seven, and that included Hendrick Motorsports' baby-faced trio of Alex Bowman, William Byron and Chase Elliott.

■ Although the sky isn't falling, and maybe the focus too often takes a sinister slant. But that's on NASCAR to clean up — and only NASCAR knows the size of the project.

NBA strikes deal to provide data to bettors

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The NBA and WNBA will now share official data with MGM Resorts International, a major win for the leagues as they prepare for the anticipated growth of sports betting across the country.

The Las Vegas-based casino giant will pay the NBA for that data to use in determining outcomes of various bets. The NBA's stance has been that getting accurate stats to bettors is critical so players know what they're betting on and so casinos will know when to pay out, and MGM Resorts is the first casino to make an arrangement with the league for those numbers.

Terms of the deal announced Tuesday were not disclosed, other than it's a multi-year arrangement.

"I know the value of data," MGM chairman and CEO James Murren said. "To be able to have the official NBA data for sports bettors around the world is very valuable. I was willing to, and I've paid for that."



Silver

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, who has been talking with Murren about such an arrangement for weeks, said the leagues believe they're getting adequately compensated for the data.

"It's a leap of faith on both sides," Silver said. "It's a deal moderate in length where I think we can both step back and assess as we go and see, 'Is it working? Is this deal fair? Are we providing the consumers with the right type of experience?'

It's the first such deal between a major U.S. sports league and a casino.

"We understand the value of our marks, of official designations," Silver said. "But I think then in terms of the data we're providing, we have a sense of the magnitude of

the current business and a sense of where things may go over the next few years. And I'd say we generally tried to approximate in a sense to come up with what we thought was fair compensation."

How MGM will get that data remains unclear.

NBA stat data is distributed globally by Sportradar, which sends it to media outlets, broadcasters and betting outlets outside the U.S. — but not inside this country, at least for now. With the start of preseason games still about two months away, there's plenty of time for those matters to get worked out.

"What this relationship entails is access to official data for the many casinos that MGM operates," Silver said. "It's the use of the NBA's intellectual property and as we've discussed before we're very focused on integrity provisions to protect our fans, to protect those who choose to engage and bet on the NBA."

Briefly

Manziel starting for Montreal

MONTREAL — Johnny Manziel will make his CFL debut against his former team on Friday night.

The Montreal Alouettes announced that Manziel will be their starter when they host the Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

The 2012 Heisman Trophy winner began the season with Hamilton and was dealt to Montreal on July 22 in a five-player deal that also included two first-round draft picks.

Montreal acquired Manziel and offensive linemen Tony Washington and Landon Rice for receiver Chris Williams, defensive lineman Jaama Westerman and 2021-22 first-round draft picks. The move reunited Manziel with Alouettes coach Mike Sherman, who recruited Manziel to Texas A&M.

Nationals jettison Kelley

WASHINGTON — Shawn Kelley's outburst on the mound got him booted from the Washington Nationals.

The Nationals designated Kelley for assignment on Wednesday, a day after he threw his glove to the ground and glared into the dugout while working the ninth inning of a 25-4 blowout of the New York Mets.

Kelley entered the game with Washington leading 25-1. He appeared agitated and was working quickly, and he had already allowed a run when the plate umpire warned him to slow down. After the warning, he gave up a two-run homer to Jeff McNeil, prompting the outburst.

Kelley apologized for his actions afterward, saying he just wanted the game to end.

The 34-year-old Kelley signed as a free agent with Washington in December 2015 and appeared in 135 games with the team. He had a 3.34 ERA in 35 appearances this season. He has pitched in 424 games, all in relief, over 10 seasons with four teams, and has a 3.73 career ERA.

Merriman in bare-knuckle fight

LOS ANGELES — The former NFL linebacker known as "Lights Out" will try to punch out an opponent's hand in a bare-knuckle boxing match.

Shawne Merriman has agreed to compete with the World Bare Knuckle Fighting Federation on a pay-per-view event in Casper, Wyo., this fall, the promoters announced Wednesday.

The 34-year-old Merriman was a three-time Pro Bowl selection during his eight-year NFL career with the Chargers and the Bills.

Merriman retired from the NFL in 2013, and he flirted with the idea of becoming a professional wrestler the next year. He has trained in mixed martial arts during his retirement, even considering a professional bout in Japan.

Italy bidding for 2026 Games

MILAN — Italy will launch a three-city bid to host the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan, Turin and Cortina.

The Italian Olympic Committee announced the move on Wednesday, having decided a joint bid was more cost effective. It was unanimously voted for by the CONI board.

Other possible candidates for the 2026 Olympics are: Stockholm; Erzurum, Turkey; Calgary, Canada; and Sapporo, Japan.

International Olympic Committee members will pick the host in Milan in October 2019.

— Associated Press

NFL

Gruden relying on vets again with Raiders

By JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

NAPA, Calif. — Since Jon Gruden last coached in the NFL a decade ago, the league has undergone a youth movement.

Thanks to a collective bargaining agreement that limits salaries for players in their first four years and a more spread out game that places a greater premium on speed, teams have relied more than ever on young players.

Gruden still is showing the same kind of preference for experience that he did when he first took over the Raiders back in 1998, signing 11 players this offseason who are already in their 30s.

"We've added a veteran presence," Gruden said. "Some people don't like it, but I like Derrick Johnson, I like Marcus Gilchrist, I like guys that know what the heck is going on."

That's the opposite direction most teams have gone since Gruden last coached in Tampa Bay in 2008.

The youth movement hit high gear after the 2011 collective bargaining agreement, and the average age for NFL players fell to 26.4 years last season, according to Football Outsiders, the lowest since the website began tracking that number in 2006.

But Gruden is bucking that trend, signing players like Johnson, Jordy Nelson, Frostee Rucker and Leon Hall.

"Heck yeah, that's a positive," tight end Jared Cook said. "It helps the maturity of this team. When you get young guys, especially nowadays, these young guys just don't get what the NFL is about. Even something as simple as veteran presence and veteran



Raiders coach Jon Gruden walks as players stretch during practice in Napa, Calif., on Saturday. Gruden has bucked the youth movement trend and brought in veterans.

leadership, they don't understand that. Veteran respect, they don't necessarily get that. So, having vets in the locker room and having vets around you that know the role, know how things go and that hold other people accountable... is huge. You can't buy that anywhere, because vets know how it's supposed to be done, and they're going to get it done the right way it's supposed to be."

Gruden took a similar tack in his first stint in Oakland, bringing in players such as Eric Allen, Jerry Rice, Rich Gannon, Andre Rison, William Thomas, Trace Armstrong and Anthony Newman to help

turn the Raiders from a losing team into a playoff participant his final two seasons.

Several of the older players have ties to either defensive coordinator Paul Guenther or special teams coordinator Rich Bisaccia, giving the coaching staff some proven players who are able to help teach the new systems.

"It's very important," Guenther said. "I always say this, but it's a player's game. So when you have guys that really understand the details of everything... Obviously, we haven't been through a season with some of the guys who were here last year: Some

of the things that come up, whether it be in the locker room or in the meeting room. I may say, 'Hey, remember when this happened two years ago against Atlanta?' We recall those things. So it's very helpful to have guys that are in the infantry line there to help us out."

The Raiders made an effort to add players like that in every position group on defense with Rucker on the defensive line, Emmanuel Lamur at linebacker, and Reggie Nelson and Leon Hall in the secondary all familiar with Guenther's defense and able to serve as sounding boards for their teammates.

Rashaan Melvin said he frequently turns to Hall, who spent nine seasons in Cincinnati when Guenther was a defensive assistant or coordinator.

"Any time we're putting in a new defensive scheme or whatever it might be, he's been in the system for a long time," Melvin said. "If it's a nickel position, he knows it. If it's the corner position, he knows it. So, whatever questions we might have to ask or to ask coach, he's like another coach for us in the room."

But as much as the older players were brought in for their knowledge, it won't matter at all if they still can't play at a high level. They need to be much more than unofficial coaches on the field.

The next few weeks will show what these veterans still have left. The 33-year-old Nelson, who has already impressed his coaches and teammates, is trying to prove that his dropoff last season had more to do with Aaron Rodgers' injury than his advancing age.

"The thing that you hear about that he can't run anymore, that's false," quarterback Derek Carr said. "I can tell you, he's one of the fastest skill guys that we have still. He can run. You see that by his route running. If he can win on underneath routes that means DB's are scared about what he can do over the top. He's still Jordy Nelson, that's for sure."

Fitzpatrick prepares to fill in for suspended Bucs QB Winston

By FRED GOODALL
Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — As a veteran quarterback accustomed to ever-changing roles, there's little Ryan Fitzpatrick hasn't experienced during a 14-year NFL career.

He's been a starter and a backup — several times.

Now, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers are counting on him to help them weather Jameis Winston's three-game suspension for violating the league's personal conduct policy.

And then head back to the bench.

"I thought I had seen and been through it all," said Fitzpatrick, who's entering his second season with his seventh pro team. "But another year, another different situation."

Not that the 35-year-old is complaining.

Fitzpatrick signed with Tampa Bay before last season, knowing coach Dirk Koetter sought him purely as a backup.

"I've learned that you view it as a one-game-at-a-time opportu-

nity. That's just the way it is in this league," Fitzpatrick said.

"In 2015, when I played with the (New York) Jets, I was a backup and ended up (playing) the whole year with the situation there," he added. "In 2016, I was a starter and I ended up getting benched three times. Every year is different. You have to take it game by game and just go from there."

Fitzpatrick, who turns 36 in November, entered the NFL as a seventh-round draft pick of the St. Louis Rams in 2005.

In addition to the Bucs and Jets, he's also played for the Cincinnati Bengals, Buffalo Bills, Tennessee Titans and Houston Texans, completing nearly 60 percent of his passes for 26,991 yards, 173 touchowns and 136 interceptions.

He's one of just four players in NFL history — along with Vinny Test Aver, Gus Frerotte and Chris Chandler — to throw TD passes with seven teams.

Winston, suspended following the league's investigation of an allegation that he groped a female Uber driver during a ride in March 2016, will miss games

against New Orleans, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh to begin the season.

"The season hasn't even started yet ... It's a cliché, but it's one game at a time. You have to look at it that way," Fitzpatrick said. "Not even based off last year, talent-wise, looking at the team we have out here. I'm in the huddle off offense, and it's a pretty exciting huddle to be in as a quarterback looking at some of those guys."

With Winston missing three games and portions of two others because of injury, Fitzpatrick went 2-1 as a starter a year ago. Three seasons ago, he threw for a career-best 3,905 yards and 31 TDs with the Jets.

Koetter noted that Fitzpatrick has 119 career starts and said he has total confidence in the veteran's ability to handle the offense.

"We're fortunate enough to have him," Koetter said. "We saw what he could do when he was our starter last year for three games. There's no reason for us to be afraid of Ryan playing quarterback for us. He's going to play fine."



Buccaneers quarterbacks Ryan Fitzpatrick, left, and Jameis Winston talk during practice on Friday. Fitzpatrick will start for the first three games of the season while Winston serves his suspension.

And Winston, who's allowed to practice during training camp and play preseason games, intends to do whatever he can to help Fitzpatrick and No. 3 quarterback Ryan Griffin, a fifth-year pro who's never taken a snap in a regular-season game.

"As a teammate first, I understand it's about this team and I am

going to be there for Fitz as much as I can," Winston, entering his fourth season, said.

"But it's also about getting Ryan (Griffin) ready as well," the 2013 Heisman Trophy winner added. "My influence on this team is going to be positive, and I'm going to be their best support system they have."

NFL



PHOTOS BY KEITH SRAKOCIC/AP

Steelers rookie running back Jaylen Samuels makes a catch during drills Monday at training camp in Latrobe, Pa. Samuels is taking advantage of Le'Veon Bell's "business decision" to skip training camp, displaying his skills so the Steelers can figure out how much depth they have at running back.

Beyond Bell

Steelers looking at other RB options

BY DAN SCIFIO
Associated Press

LATROBE, Pa. — Pittsburgh Steelers running back James Conner knows what to expect.

Two-time All-Pro running back Le'Veon Bell is skipping training camp at St. Vincent College for the second straight season because of a contract dispute. Bell's absence last summer meant Conner saw additional snaps in camp as a rookie.

This time, he's raised expectations. He's at the top of the depth chart, at least until Bell arrives.

"Le'Veon here or not, I'm focused and trying to prove to myself that I'm in shape and I can handle playing," Conner said. "I'm focused no matter who's here or who's not here."

Bell chose not to sign his franchise tender until the eve of the 2017 season. He is expected to follow the same path this time. That's OK with Conner, who intends to prove he can handle the heavier workload.

"I want to show it all," Conner said. "Every time I get in, I'm going to make every rep count."

Conner, a former star at the University of Pittsburgh, showed flashes as a rookie, sporadically filling in to give Bell a breather. The Steelers' 2017 third-round pick appeared in 14 games, rushing 32 times for 144 yards, an average of 4.5 yards per carry, before a knee injury ended his season.

A leaner, trimmer Conner initially turned heads during spring workouts and that effort has carried into training camp.

Conner set the tone with a touchdown on the first competitive snap of training camp. Ben Roethlisberger delivered a quick slant to the slot where Conner hauled in the touchdown ahead of former first-round pick Artie Burns.

On Monday, Conner broke off a long touchdown run during a drill that featured live tackling. He displayed speed as he burst through the hole and into the secondary, where he ran away from safety Nat Berhe on route to the end zone.

Steelers coach Mike Tomlin expects that kind of development from Conner in his second season.

"We've been around the track for a lap," Tomlin said. "He understands what's going on in terms of the environment of professional football. He should



Steelers running back James Conner breaks a long run from scrimmage during training camp Monday.

utilize that experience and knowledge to produce a better, more consistent performance."

Rookie Jaylen Samuels still seeks that kind of consistency. He is taking advantage of the extra snaps to see where he fits in.

Samuels, a fifth-round pick, was a do-everything standout at North Carolina State. The 6-foot, 225-pounder stepped in at running back, fullback, wide receiver and even tight end. He ranks second in school history in total touchdowns, fourth in touchdown catches and sixth in scoring runs.

The Steelers list Samuels as a running back, but he's also being used in the slot or split out as a receiver.

"I don't want to be held to just one skill," Samuels said. "I want to be able to showcase a lot of different skills. Whenever I go against different mismatches, I want it to be tough on them."

Best is yet to come for Chargers' Bosa

BY DAN GREENSPAN
Associated Press

COSTA MESA, Calif. — Los Angeles Chargers defensive end Joey Bosa set an NFL record with 19 sacks in his first 20 career games.

He recorded at least 10½ sacks in each of his first two seasons, but Bosa and the Chargers insist the best is yet to come.

"I think there's so much I have to work on that I have an idea in my head of what I want things to look like and how I want to be as a player, and I'm not anywhere near those things, but I know I'm making the right steps in that direction," Bosa said Sunday.

Cornerback Casey Hayward has never been shy in sharing his belief that Bosa could become the best defender in football. It was only reinforced last season as Bosa's pass rush skills helped contribute to Hayward intercepting four passes.

"Made my life a lot easier," Hayward said. "A couple of my picks last year came off Joey hitting the guy, wobbly ball, I take all of them."

Entering his third season, the next step in Bosa's development could come from a better understanding of coordinator Gus Bradley's 4-3 defense. The Chargers were productive in 2017 while transitioning to Bradley's system, finishing third in points per game allowed, tied for fifth in sacks, and sixth in takeaways. Those rankings could improve as the coaches, players and front office are more comfortable with what will allow the defense to succeed in this iteration.

The Chargers added depth in

If you want to get 15 sacks and you're out there doing your own things to get sacks, more than likely you're going to hurt the team,'

Joe Bosa
Chargers DE

the draft, with Bosa praising defensive lineman Justin Jones and linebacker Uchenna Nwosu for their ability to get to the quarterback. The progression of second-year defensive end Isaac Rochell could result in Bosa staying fresh by allowing Bradley to rotate more. The 280-pound Bosa could play inside if Rochell is capable of creating pressure off the edge consistently, allowing Bradley to use his most disruptive players together in obvious passing situations.

Bosa, who had 12½ sacks last season as the bookend to Melvin Ingram, could cause more havoc if opponents can't focus all their attention on stopping the two standout defensive ends. "Joey can improve," coach Anthony Lynn said. "I don't think he has reached his peak yet at all, and the better we get on that defensive line and create more one-on-one matchups, that's going to help his success as well."

But Bosa will never put a target on his individual production going into his season after recognizing that chasing personal goals often comes at the expense of both the individual and the team.

"If you want to get 15 sacks and you're out there doing your own things to get sacks, more than likely you're going to hurt the team and not get a sack rather than you just doing your job and you falling into one," Bosa said. "I've come to realize when I'm really out there trying to make a play like that, I do something wrong and they'll break a run or whatever. But if I stay within myself and the defense, it usually works out pretty well."



Chargers defensive end Joey Bosa has recorded 10 1/2 sacks in each of his first two seasons, including 19 sacks in his first 20 games.

JAC C. HONG/AP

SPORTS

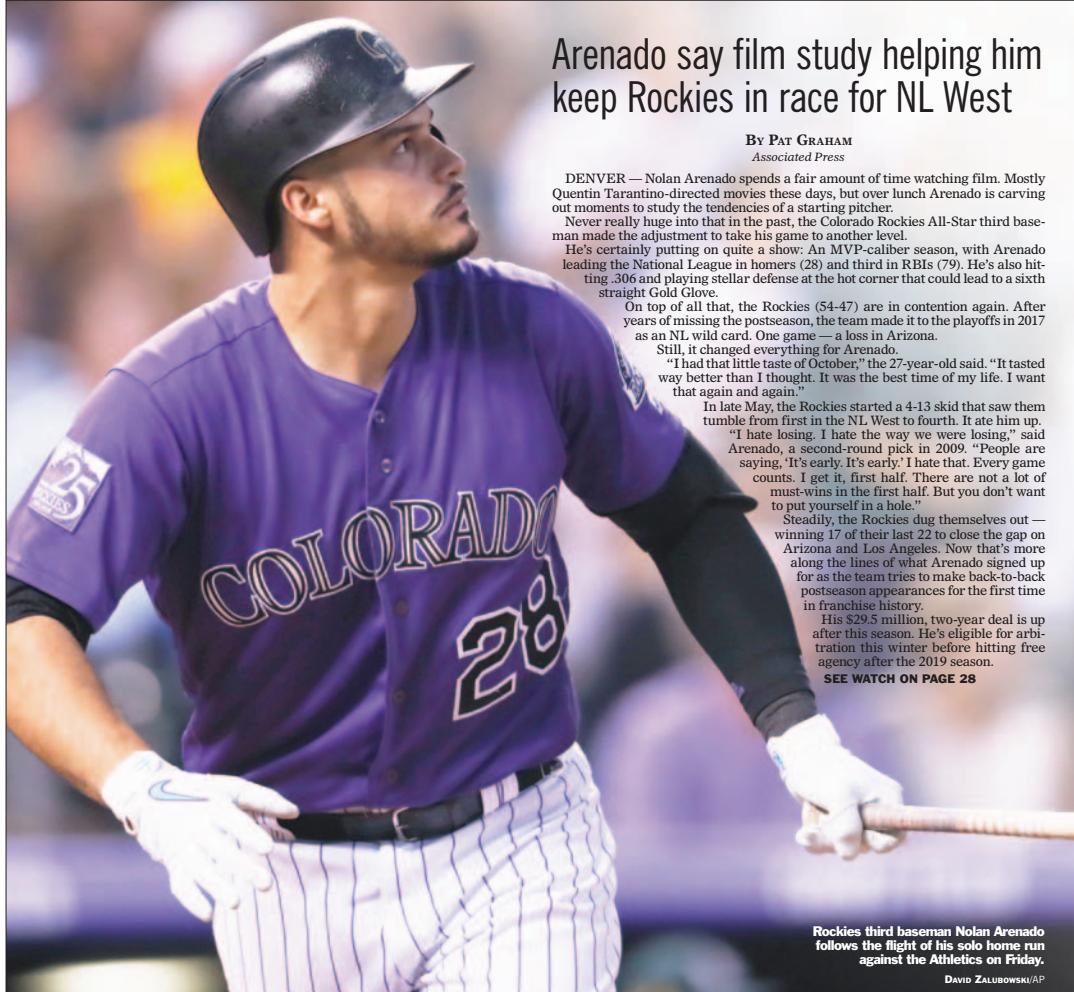


On the move

Dozier, Archer among top trades at deadline » **MLB, Page 28**

MLB

Watch and learn



Arenado says film study helping him keep Rockies in race for NL West

BY PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

DENVER — Nolan Arenado spends a fair amount of time watching film. Mostly Quentin Tarantino-directed movies these days, but over lunch Arenado is carving out moments to study the tendencies of a starting pitcher.

Never really huge into that in the past, the Colorado Rockies All-Star third baseman made the adjustment to take his game to another level.

He's certainly putting on quite a show: An MVP-caliber season, with Arenado leading the National League in homers (28) and third in RBIs (79). He's also hitting .306 and playing stellar defense at the hot corner that could lead to a sixth straight Gold Glove.

On top of all that, the Rockies (54-47) are in contention again. After years of missing the postseason, the team made it to the playoffs in 2017 as an NL wild card. One game — a loss in Arizona.

Still, it changed everything for Arenado. "I had that little taste of October," the 27-year-old said. "It tasted way better than I thought. It was the best time of my life. I want that again and again."

In late May, the Rockies started a 4-13 skid that saw them tumble from first in the NL West to fourth. It ate him up.

"I hate losing. I hate the way we were losing," said Arenado, a second-round pick in 2009. "People are saying, 'It's early. It's early.' I hate that. Every game counts. ... get it, first half. There are not a lot of come-from-behind wins in the first half. But you don't want to put yourself in a hole."

Steadily, the Rockies dug themselves out — winning 17 of their last 22 to close the gap on Arizona and Los Angeles. Now that's more along the lines of what Arenado signed up for as the team tries to make back-to-back postseason appearances for the first time in franchise history.

His \$29.5 million, two-year deal is up after this season. He's eligible for arbitration this winter before hitting free agency after the 2019 season.

SEE WATCH ON PAGE 28

Rockies third baseman Nolan Arenado follows the flight of his solo home run against the Athletics on Friday.

DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Raiders' Gruden counting on his veterans » **NFL, Page 30**

